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OUR SAINTS.

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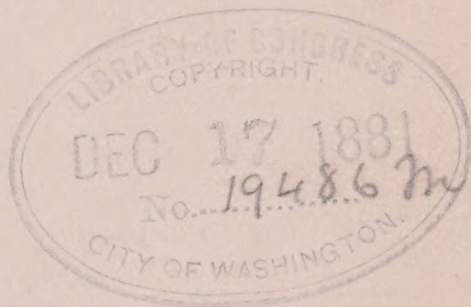
FAMILY STORY.

BY

ROSE PORTER,

AUTHOR OF "SUMMER DRIFTWOOD"; "IN THE MIST"; "CHARITY,
SWEET CHARITY"; ETC.

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NEW YORK:
ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH & COMPANY,
900 BROADWAY, COR. 20TH STREET.

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EDWARD O. JENKINS,
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NEW YORK:

ROBERT RUTTER,
Binder,
116 and 118 East 14th Street.

*"The Saints above are stars in Heaven—
What are the Saints on earth?*

*Faith is their fixed, unswerving root,
Hope their unfading flower,
Fair deeds of Charity their fruit."*

*"In the New Testament the term Saint is applied to
all believers, as being separated from the world,
consecrated to God, and destined for holiness."*

*"Sin is the creature will revolting against the creator
will. Sin is the slightest act that means No, to
God. It begins back of action. It begins in
thought, which is the seed of action."*

*"Think, and be careful what thou art within,
For there is sin in the desire of sin:
Think, and be thankful, in a different case,
For there is grace in the desire of grace."*

PART FIRST.

2

"The Bible Saints were not the heroes of romance, for then they might have been painted spotless. They were the men of real life, and the details of that life sometimes guilty enough. But, then, life was an earnest thing with them. It was transgression, if you will, but then it was sore, buffeting struggle after that.—It was the penitence of men bent manfully on turning back to God. And so they fought their way back till they struggled out of the thick darkness into the clear light of day and peace.

"Let us lay this to heart. It is not the having been 'far-off' that makes peace impossible, it is anything which keeps a man away from Christ."

ROBERTSON.

OUR SAINTS;

A FAMILY STORY.

I.

THERE are only two of us left in this home-nest,—all the others flew away long ago.

But when my story begins there were four sisters, and four brothers.—Such a troop of young ones for a little mother to guide and control, the oldest not out of his teens, and the youngest only a six-year-old girl.

We were as equally divided, my mother used to say, as the halves of a globe-shaped gem. Four with eyes as blue as the sky, thorough Saxons in feature, and fair tinting of complexion, and hair,—and with Saxon hearts too, that loved old England so well, we thought it,—as many another has,—the happiest land the sun shone on.

Four with dark eyes, and features clear cut, nut-brown hair, and that piquant grace of gesture and varying expression which belonged to our mother, who was a daughter of France; and with natures a bit fiery, tempers a bit quick perchance, but spite this, my dark-eyed brothers, Hugh and Yvo, my sisters, Zita and Eulalie, had loving and true hearts.

We others were Francis,—and he is the brother who still calls this old nest, home, and who has persuaded me to write this record of our lives,—Herbert and Bridget, whom we always call Britta, our shining light,—Bridget, who was named for the grandmother of Irish descent, and myself Maud, in memory of Saint Maud, daughter of the old Saxon count with whom far back in the centuries my father traced kinship.

Saint Maud, who from childhood, as the old record tells, lived the life of the pure in heart who see God, and thus possessed the truest greatness.—Saint Maud, who lived in the world, and yet was not of it.

My mother chose our names, with, as we

came to know even while we were yet children, a deeper meaning than mere musical sound and harmony of utterance.—She had some quaint fancies, this mother of ours, that were closely linked with the early associations of her childhood's home in sunny France, where Sabbath after Sabbath, and on festival and saints' days, she had gone with her father and mother to worship in the village church, or to learn from the parish priest.

A good old man, with that charity of heart and mind that recognized, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all," underlying the many creeds of many sects, and peoples.

I think it was because she had been thus early trained in a school of Love, because her dear heart was so permeated with "that love which looketh kindly, and the wisdom which looketh soberly on all things," that my mother was able to so easily assimilate with the change in form and worship, that held sway in this English home, to which my father brought her.

She was of a deeply earnest nature, that responded like the chords of a musical harp to the lightest touch of beauty, and vibrated to every high-toned elevating influence. And often during the latter years of her dear life, did she tell me, how from the very first hour of their meeting, my father uplifted her heart and mind, as the oak uplifts the vine, that clings to it for support.

A common enough metaphor, but nevertheless like most commonplace things full of tender significance, for while the oak *uplifts*, how often the tendrils of the vine reach out and beyond the massive branches to which it clings.

The significance of the commonplace!—If I had been a scholar I would have penned more than one page on this subject, choosing for a text Aaron's rod that budded.

My mother's parents had married late in life, and happy in the most happy wedded love, scarcely ever left the old Chateau, her childhood's home.

Hence she grew up a child in all the sweet

qualities of a child-like heart, yet with a gentle gravity of thought, blended with bright gleams of vivacity, as light and shade blend on meadow-grass, when the day is sunshiny, save for the fleecy cloudlets that dance in the blue above.

The angel-winged clouds, as the peasant children in far-away France call them.

She was only a girl of eighteen when my father wooed, wed, and brought her to this English manor-house, — Glentwood Hall, — our home, as indeed it has been the home of our ancestors for many and many a century.

For the Glentwoods of Glentwood Hall, rank among the oldest, of the many old families of this ancient county of Devonshire.

II.

I AM tempted to linger and describe this dear home,—my home ever since I can remember, with but that brief spring-time, when I went forth one April a smiling bride, and returned before the May days had slipped into June,—a widow.

But I do not like that word,—for he is mine still I think, only,—he is with God in heaven,—and,—God is with me on earth,—yet, though God is with us both, there is such a difference between heaven and earth,—such a difference!

And yet it is written, the kingdom of heaven is within you,—and “it is not distance that separates us from the spirit land.”

Our home,—from well-nigh every high outlook for miles and miles around you can catch a view of its gable roof, and tower, though as you approach by the way of the park, you

have scarcely more than an occasional glimpse through the opening trees of the ivy-covered walls, and mullioned, diamond-latticed windows.

The Hall is in the parish of Milton-Abbot, a beautifully situated village on the river Tamar, and the parish church is almost as dear to us, as our home, and to my eyes there never was a more beautiful church, though I know full well its beauty of arches, mouldings, and windows, is much mutilated by time, and sorely needs renovating, or restoring, as the modern enterprisers call it, but which to my conservative notions, always seems akin to destroying.

During the spring and summer time, the door that is prefaced by the porch,—that fills the square of the tower—almost always stands wide open. Preaching as an open church-door ever does by suggestion, the never-ceasing call of the church's Master,—“Come unto Me, ye weary, I will give you rest.”

I often go within for a quiet tarrying, on my way to and from the village, where I

have many parish duties, for our old Rector has neither wife or daughter, and there are so many parish calls that need a woman's heart, and hands to answer.

Curtains of deep crimson, somewhat faded, and in places almost threadbare, are loosely drawn from before the door-way, and as they gently sway in the soft air of the spring and summer days, they

“Cast over arch and roof a crimson glow,
But ne'ertheless all is silence and all shade,
. . . . Save only for the rippling flow
Of their long foldings, when the sweet air
Sighs through the casements of the house of
prayer.”

Back of the church are old ruins, much ivy draped, and fast crumbling away, yet among them, there still remain some walls of the conventual church, which was dedicated to Saint Gregory, with at the east end, lancet-shaped windows, coeval with the foundation.

Graves are clustered about the churchyard almost as close together as primroses in the hedge-rows, some marked by ancient head-

stones, on which the records are much time-defaced and hidden by the gray clinging moss, that belongs to graveyard stones.—Other marble slabs glow white and clear in the sunshine, and moonlight, every letter on them easy to read.—And the flowers that grow on the ancient mounds, and the recent, are as unlike, as old sorrow and new.

But,—does real sorrow ever grow old?

The old mounds are covered with thick growths of the deep glossy leaves of the blue-eyed periwinkle, while the more recent, are Lent-lily, and rose planted, and fresh flowers strewn from April to December.

To one with courage and strength to climb the steep hill, eastward of the village, there awaits a rich reward whatever the season, so varied and beautiful are the wide outlooks on every side.

In truth, no other county in old England can rival I think our Devonshire in picturesque and romantic views, antiquarian remains, and geological riches, as well as in extreme diversity of general scenery. The

central part of the western district extending as it does, from the vale of Exeter to the banks of the Tamar, chiefly consists of barren and uncultivated Dartmoor, a region wild and dreary, made up of lofty hills, craggy rocks, and narrow valleys strewn with great masses of granite, that seem to have fallen in some wild struggle of nature from the surrounding heights. — Such a contrast to the vale of Exeter, bounded as it is, by a range of undulating hills, and the mountainous ridge of Blackdown.

“The garden of Devonshire” is my favorite section of the county, — a garden walled in with goodly protective barriers, Dartmoor and the heights of Chudleigh on the north, the river Plym and Plymouth Sound on the west, Torbay on the east, and southward, by the blue waters of the Channel, that broad pathway, that leads to the open sea. As children and young folk, we brothers and sisters needed no longer journeys in search of adventure, change of air, or the expansion of mind variety of scene gives, than our own county

afforded, and my brothers, while still growing lads, knew Dartmoor forest, and were as familiar, at least by name, with the many and extensive deer parks, the rivers, and their tributary streams, and the legends of the coast, as they were with their best conned lessons.

As for us sisters, even as children we could count the most beautiful of the beautiful prospects with which the county abounded, with as much ease, as we repeated the multiplication table, while our interest in the "Valley of Stones" was unfailing, and as we grew older, there was the deeper interest of the Cathedral, and the ruins of Rougemount Castle in Exeter, as well as the remains of numerous abbeys, and churches, with their manifold traces of Ecclesiastical architecture. The castles and the ancient mansions were always full, too, of romance, while the Druidical or Celtic remains on Dartmoor, and in other parts of the county, seemed voiceful with weird strange echoes of mystical significance, from the long bygone years.

It was by these comparatively near home associations, that our mother sought to expand our opening minds, and she often said, when we returned from some excursion that perchance had extended over days,—every one now an amulet in memory,—that we came back from every new glimpse of God's wondrous creation, and man's courageous work, like diamonds that sparkled with brighter lustre for every new sun-ray they caught.

As for home itself, there was education in a certain way in every nook and corner of it, for the Hall is a quaint old-time building,—and like so many English mansions,—with a central tower, and long low wings extending on either side.

The red brick of the massive walls of the northern wing is almost hidden by ivy,—while vines that love the sunshine creep up and twine about the gable windows, and overhanging eaves of the southern end, which bows out on the lower floor toward the lawn, and is encircled by a broad veranda, that in summer time is like a bower-room, it is so shut in by

climbing roses, flowering honeysuckle, and sweet briar.

As for the tower, some by-gone ancestor, who had wearied of the red brick walls, had caused it to be stuccoed, and though to my taste, the warm glow of the original color, best suited the old structure, the sombre tint of gray caught through the thick glossy leaves of the close-clinging ivy, gave perchance a still more venerable look.

A broad flight of steps leads to the portico, which opens straightway into the vast hall, where in winter, from Christmas eve on to twelfth night, the ruddy gleam of the yule-log burning with a steady flame in the wide open-hearted fireplace, throws a mystic charm of mingled light and shadow, over the old portraits, curiously wrought tapestry, and blazing shields and armor, with which the walls are hung.

All the principal apartments open from the hall, though they are not many, neither are they remarkable for size, but every one is adorned with some rare work of art, and in

arrangement, even to this day, reveal the exquisite taste my mother possessed, combined with her quick appreciation and value of every relic of the past, that holds a deeper meaning than mere age,—though that is a touchstone, I always think, to thought-laden backward-looks, and forward, too, for that matter.

The dining-room is wainscoted, and over the fireplace, and in the four corners of the room, are shelved niches, well filled with treasures of old china, and rare specimens of what we moderns call, “bric-a-brac.”——This room commands from its windows finer views than any apartment on the lower floor.

The library, brother Francis’ special room, is opposite, and though comparatively small, it contains a well-chosen supply of books, and huge portfolios of companion prints, that serve to illustrate the volumes of history, art, or travel.

My nook opens from the library, and is in fact little more than a projecting bay, that my mother had curtained off, and where by her planning, in place of the diamond lattice, a

single pane of glass was inserted ; through which a beautiful outlook is caught, and no sooner caught than reflected in an opposite mirror.

It is a sort of wonder-land glimpse, over-arched by mingled and harmonious color, in which the tinting of beech and yew, blend with clear-toned greens of maple and elm, and the feathery, misty foliage of laburnum and acacia, with rugged stately boughs of cedar and oak,—those great trees, that count a century but as a day.

A glen-like terrace opens out below the leafy arch, at the far end of which, as though framed by a mosaic of leaf and twig, is an alpine-like, wild, picturesque glimpse of nature.

It is at the boundary of the park, and toward the part of the grounds that we always call our miniature Switzerland,—for just there, the banks of the Tamar are wild and rugged ; and the woods that fringe the park are ascended by a zigzag climb, that leads to a tiny rustic lodge, a veritable Swiss cottage, with exterior staircase, and gallery leading to the

one upper room ; from which you can see far down the river, and across the marsh meadows, over to the hills beyond.

The cottage was built when we were children, as a surprise for Zita,—she so loved rural scenes and rural life,—and it is furnished too, *à la Suisse*, with wooden inlaid chairs and table, and supplied with horn spoons, and cups, wooden plates, and platters, and has been the scene of many a joyous feast, on holiday and festival.

But, if its near surroundings are Swiss-like, the meadows across the river are thoroughly English in their suggestions.

The dear meadows, that are all aglow now in the spring-time with marsh marigolds, the flower

“That shines like fire, in swamps, and hollows gray,”
while,

“By the meadow trenches bloom faint sweet cuckoo-
flowers.”

the “lady smock all silver white”; wavy reeds, wild grasses, and osiers grow there too. All

of them seeming at this season, hints of the blooms out on the hill-sides, lanes, and field-paths,—the cowslips and the crowfoot, prim-roses and daisies, and the many and dear flowers of rural England, that are nodding and peeping out from every hedge-row and nook where a bud or a blossom can find space to smile up toward the blue of the sky, or the overhanging green of tree and shrub.

III.

EVER since I can remember, I have had a fancy for beginning any new undertaking in the spring-time ; thus I am especially glad that brother Francis wished me to begin this history at this season ; and that yesterday, when we talked it over, was one of those perfect days, when all nature seemed pulsing with a hymn of praise, that rivalled the birds, that were wooing and wedding among the green-tipped branches of the old trees out in the park.

As well they might be, for it was "cuckoo day," the fifteenth of April.

Ah, how they sang, the livelong hours through ; first the larks, heralding the morning as they floated sky-ward on their russet pinions ; while the gray-linnets chose noon-time for their special carol-hour ; and the thrushes and the blackbirds, the robins and the meekly-

chirping sparrows, kept up a perpetual festival of song all the time ;—a song chorused by the many, many songsters of old England, with a melody that was sweetest and most musicfull as the day waned ; for then it held the tender note of the evening song, and held too, as a prayer holds an amen, the first faint note of a nightingale, the June bird, that by mistake breathed a song in April, like Mrs. Browning's white rose, not waiting for the summer.

Do you remember?

“For if I wait,” said she,
 “Till time for roses be,—
 For the musk-rose and the moss-rose,
 Royal-red and maiden-blush-rose,—

“What glory then for me
 In such a company?
 Roses plenty, roses plenty,
 And one nightingale for twenty?

“Nay let me in,” said she,
 “Before the rest are free.—

• • • • • •
 • • • • • •

“ For I would lonely stand,
Uplifting my white hand,—
On a mission, on a mission,
To declare the coming vision.”

Like our nightingale I repeat, who by that one delicate note, a mere tracery of song, brought before us like a vision, the glory, and the beauty of summer,—only a vision, for it was a song note that lasted but for a moment, and then was merged and lost in the universal, complex, and yet care-free bird melody.

Yes, care-free, that is the very joy of bird songs to me, for,

“ No Future taunts them with its fears or hopes,
No cares their Present fret ;
The Past for them no dismal vista opes
Of useless, dark regret.

“ Below, Earth blooms for them ; and above
Heaven smiles in boundless blue ;
Joy is in all things, and the song of Love
Thrills their whole being through.

“ Ah ! we who boast we are the crown of things,
Like them are never glad ;
By doubts and dreams and dark self-questionings
We stand besieged and sad.

“What know we of that rare felicity
The unconscious birdling knows ;
That no misgiving spoils ; that frank and free
From merely living grows.”

Thinking thus of the birds, one can readily believe the legend of the old monk of Heisterbach, to whom as he listened to the song of a forest warbler, a hundred years appeared as one day.

So many memories, that have long been silent, wake up and become voiceful, as I begin to pen this family record, I find myself well-nigh bewildered as to how to arrange it.

The truth is, while a family history is verily like a bit of tapestry, a thing woven of many colors, yet as every color has its own special tint, so every brother and sister in our band of eight, even from earliest infancy, had as distinctly marked an individuality, as Jacob's sons in the Bible story.

I wonder, were those brothers thus portrayed as characteristically so totally unlike each other, that parents, all through the ages, might be comforted, when they find faults in

one child, not in another; though both are trained in the same home school, and guarded and prayed for by the same parental hearts of love?

I expressed something of this to Francis yesterday, as I appealed to him for advice, as to how I could tell the story of our eight individual lives, if I interblended them in one commingled record.

And by his counsel, I decide to divide my recital into eight parts, just as God has divided our lives, giving us each a soul, and a body, as unlike each other, as flowers are unlike one another in form and hue.

Flowers, that are so typical of these souls of ours, because like them they come straight from the hand of God.

I will be greatly aided in my task by a folio of closely-written pages, marked, "Reminiscences of my Children," that I found not long ago in the topmost drawer of my mother's ebony cabinet; and from which I shall copy extracts, as they contain brief outline histories that are like pictures in suggestion, not only

of our early, but later years too, as my mother kept these records up to a recent date, and she lived to see what mothers are wont to call the future of their children; for last midsummer, when God called her, Francis was over fifty, and Britta, our little Britta, well on in the thirties—and yet, we were all children still to our mother.

It is such a tender truth that one can never grow old to a mother,—never, even though a mother become like a child to son or daughter; even though the hand that guided the uncertain steps of childhood clings at last for support, in the weakening days of age, to the child-hand; that has grown strong and firm in its clasp with the coming and going of the years,—yet,—count they ever so many, those years, a child, is still a child, to a parent's heart!

IV.

BEFORE copying a word from my mother's reminiscences, I must pause to tell that my father was an officer in the army.

A true soldier, not only for the glory and honor of his native land, but a commander, too, in that battle-field where it is hardest to win victory, — his own heart, — because as our mother always told us, in the conflict he waged there, he never fought in his own strength.

I remember as though it were but a yesterday by-gone, the gloomy March day, when in the gloaming, our mother called us about her, and told us we were fatherless.

It was not a long story, — and, alas! so commonplace, for many another brave soldier's wife and children wept that day all the land over; for the victory for which a nation re-

joiced, was won at so costly a price to England's sons and daughters!

Not one of the many pictures that have looked down on me from the familiar home walls all the days of my life, is more real to me than the picture memory holds of that hour.

We were in the library, all grouped about the low-burning embers on the hearth, for it had been a chill March day. Rain was falling, and every passing gust of wind sent a shower of drops pattering against the window pane, with a dreary sound, that was only a prelude to the after moan of the wind, as it sighed around the eaves and corners of the old Hall.

A light was burning on the centre-table, but its rays were dim, as though it, and the waning day, were at strife; the one refusing to yield to the other's sway.

My mother sat on her low chair,—so changed,—that dear little mother, from the mother of yesterday; truly it was as though in a moment, the shadow which we call eclipse, had passed before the light and sunshine of

her life, and left all darkness,——and yet,——
even in that supreme hour of anguish our
mother murmured,

“His will be done,
Who seeth not as we see, whose way
Is not as ours!”

But I will not linger over that scene,—
enough, the sorrow had come,—the shadow
had fallen, and this I understood, though I
was then too young to fully comprehend the
changes my father’s death brought into our
home and lives.

I only knew we all felt from the oldest to
the youngest of us, that after it, life meant
more in earnestness than it had ever done be-
fore.—

And if this feeling through our mother’s
influence was clothed in something of meta-
phor; if it made our daily life something of a
living allegory, I never have felt regret that it
was so; or that it came from the fact, that my
mother had, as I have said before, many
quaint fancies and customs, that blossomed

out from the associations of her early home, like roses, making the oftentime discipline they involved, sweet and fragrant, as the rose makes the thorn-set stem.

Chief among these fancies was the naming of her children; and that hour, when we sat in the gloom and the awe of great sorrow, she told us why she had chosen to call us after saints of old.

And, as she told, grief more than once interrupted her words,—more than once, she spoke only by tears; so inwoven with memories of my father, were the thoughts that were linked with our naming.

Francis held my mother's right hand as she spoke, and she bowed her head on his shoulder as he knelt by her side.

Only a brief fortnight before, Francis had celebrated his nineteenth birthday, and then all the future had been bright as a pleasant dream to him, seeming like a meadow of waving grain, over which sunlight played, and which stood strong and fair, waiting for his young hand to reap the full harvest that he

thought would be his by right of inheritance, but that lay now bruised and beaten before the storm of adversity.

For though I did not know it till long afterward, by my father's death Francis' prospects and plans for life were all changed.

The facts were, my father's claim to the Glentwood estate was involved by one condition, and that was the existence of an heir, to whom, by the right of will, the broad acres and ancestral Hall were to pass if he survived father.

But as cousin Reginald, the heir, was a man much older than my father in years,—though younger in lineal descent,—and in extremely delicate health too, my parents had naturally come to feel that father would survive him, and thus Francis become the legal heir and future head of the house; and Francis had perchance, unconsciously to them and to himself, grown up to share this feeling, as well as to take more of an oversight and interest in the details of the estate than most lads of his age would have done. An interest

which was augmented because my father's profession involved his frequent and long absence from home.

But I repeat, on my father's death all was changed, and cousin Reginald,—as true and noble-hearted a man as ever lived,—straightway became master, with something more of actual ownership even than father had possessed; for his claim was not a mere life tenure, as my father's had been, as he inherited the right to will the estate to whom he pleased.

Dear cousin Reginald, he would not hear of our leaving the Hall, but immediately he made it over to my mother, and us brothers and sisters, as a home to be jointly owned by us all, as long as we lived,—and his gift included the near park, garden, and pasture meadows eastward of the Hall.

Thus, as far as we younger children were concerned, we did not note or feel our altered condition; but to my mother, the grown lads, Zita and Eulalie, too, the sudden loss of the ample revenue derived from the outlying farms, village tenantry, and vast

tracts of woodland, caused many a care and perplexity, and made early and independent effort for self-support necessary, on the part of my brothers at least.

It necessitated, too, Francis giving up entering Oxford, for a year, till my mother had time to plan and arrange, and Hugh's leaving Eton for the same time.

For mother's chief revenue was limited to the income derived from my father's pension, and her own wedding dowry, and barely sufficient to meet daily needs, at least till she had learned the secret of making little suffice for the plenty, she had been used to.

But she was a brave little woman, and never lost heart or courage, whatever the difficulties that surrounded her.

We children were as happy as birds over some of the new arrangements, certainly over the departure of resident tutor and governess. Our rector, Mr. Saunders, undertaking to teach the brothers, and mother instructing us girls.

There were other changes too, and I can well remember how one familiar face after an-

other vanished from among the servants, till at last, only Andrew the coachman, and Smith the gardener, with Peter the groom, were left of the men ; while cook, nurse Bland, Nannette my mother's maid, and Andrew's daughter Jane, were the only women. My mother too only retained the carriage horses, and Waxy the pony, and they were all we really needed. Though child that I was, I can remember how Zita wept, when Lady Blanche, the white mare, was led away to a new home, and old General, my father's favorite roadster, became the property of 'Squire Allen.

V.

WHILE Francis had been the one to hold my mother's right hand the eventide that followed the coming of the knowledge of my father's death, it was Hugh that clasped her left,—that little lonely hand, where the shining circlet of gold shone in the dim light.

My mother's wedding ring! it grew so slender, so worn before she died,—but it always shone with a golden gleam,—and when she went from us, we left it still on her dear finger, just where my father had placed it years and years before,—the mute type of an un-ending love,—the circlet, that never was broken through all those years.

In our family band Hugh was next in age to Francis, and never were two brothers more unlike. Francis all gentleness, always composed in manner, calm and scholarly, moder-

ate in decision, but nevertheless firm as a rock when decided. A tall, slender lad, ruddy of countenance, but yet with a certain delicacy, that hinted even in youth, the invalid years he has since known.

Hugh was stalwart and strong as a young oak from babyhood, and possessed of a nature impetuous as a mountain torrent, but with a heart as clear from guile as the sparkling water of clearest cascade, yet spite this, he was wild as a young colt. A lad who needed much holding in by bit and bridle, and my little mother's hands, they were so frail, so small for the task.

But, what her hands could not do, her dear heart did ; and though Hugh fell and stumbled time after time on the race-course of life, where the battle is with right and wrong ; though he sometimes well-nigh snapped asunder both bit and bridle, he never broke quite loose from the controlling love and restraining prayers of his mother, to whom he was dear as the very echo of her own heart-beat,—dear as her life.

From the time he was a laughing baby boy, nurse Bland once told me, mother had been wont to call Hugh her "child of benediction," he was always so joyous and glad of heart.

She had a thought, too, I suppose, of the old-time Saint Hugh—in memory of whom she had named him,—and whom in a subtle way he resembled, certainly in bodily presence; he was of such rare beauty, so tall and comely; in spirit, too, I think, only the growth and likeness of a spirit, which we know in the familiar intercourse of family life, it is sometimes harder to recognize than an outer resemblance.

Hence sometimes, when I have recalled the many hours of anxiety Hugh cost mother, I have wondered, at those words, "My child of benediction,"—wondered, why she chose them for him.—Yet, what is a benediction?—the Dictionary says a blessing,—and after all, are not our greatest blessings wont to be the things that cost us most?

Next to these brothers came Zita, a girl of fifteen when our father died, but seeming

older; she had been so much of a companion to mother all her life, and by nature she was endowed with great mental power, combined with enthusiasm of temperament, that had led her on to studies and thoughts that usually belong to mature age.

Beauty too had been like an inspiration to her from childhood, music and art, poetry—silent as nature's, or voiceful as poets'—was as life-laden to her as the air she breathed.

After Zita came Eulalie, only a year and a month's difference in their ages.—

Eulalie is more like my mother than any of us, there has always been such a wondrous charm about her, a something ever in reserve, reminding one of a translucent casket, that but half reveals, and yet only half conceals the sparkling gems within.

Even to this day there is a look in her deep dark eyes, as though she saw far-off things; as though she heard “the butterflies,” and

“What they say betwixt their wings,
Or in stillest evenings,
With what voice the violet wooes
To his heart the silver dews,

Or when little airs arise
How the merry bluebell rings
To the mosses underneath."

. Yes, I always feel as though my sister Eulalie had come nearer the "great soul of the world," than we others have.

Divided from Eulalie by a bridge of time that spanned full two years, is the place filled by Herbert and myself, twins in heart, as well as age.

And then comes Yvo—my mother's mid-summer child.

And last of all little Britta, who all her life long has been like a bird, blessing us by her gladness of heart; like a star, shining for us when days have been darkest, and trials heaviest.

For we Glentwoods of Glentwood Hall have had our share of dark days, and trial hours.

VI.

LOOKING over the first pages of the papers found in my mother's cabinet, and selecting the extracts I propose to copy, makes me feel something like an artist, who turns away from the full light of mid-day, or the deepening shadows of twilight, to catch and hold on the receptive canvas, the glow and the brightness of the rosy-tinted clouds that cluster about the horizon at sunrise of a summer day; for they tell, not only of the dawning of the lives of her children, but of the morning of her own life, too.

The first date is just before Francis' birth. I make a brief extract from it, as it serves to unfold her nature better than my descriptive words can. She writes :

I was brought up in the faith of the Romish Church, but I want to express that

it was truly the *Catholic* Church, in the full comprehensiveness of the word, and while my parents, as well as Father St. Claire—our parish priest—were firm believers in infallibility, it was the infallibility of *Truth*.

I think they knew and appreciated the errors, the superstitions, and false dogmas which had crept into their Church, with the lapse of years, and held souls in bondage, as keenly as ever the most devout Protestant mourned them.

Father St. Claire's teachings, so far as I was concerned, had nothing to do with controversial subjects, and they may well be summed up in a code of love; so often the gentle, kindly old man used to say to me, "Child, 'when you have nothing else to bestow, remember, you can always give love.'"

And love comprised to him the abiding Faith, Hope, and Charity; those three precious stepping-stones to the cross, as he used to call them; each a step upward, a step higher than the preceding,—and to the child,—thus that old village priest taught,—as well as to

the man, *up higher*, must ever mean ascending by the putting down of evil.

Yes, it is an upward climb all the way from childhood to age, for,

“ Our little lives are kept in equipoise
By struggles of two opposite desires ;
The struggle of the instinct that enjoys,
And the more noble instinct that aspires.”

It was Father St. Claire, too, who made me familiar, by converse and reading, with the inspiring sentiments of such men as A'Kempis, Augustine, and Fenelon, and many another father in the faith ; and it was he who taught me the lofty uplifting hymns of praise, that had found utterance in by-gone ages in the hearts of holy men ; and that will be dear through all time to the longing, aspiring hearts of Christ's followers.

When I came to this English home, my husband's friends questioned me as to my creed ; and they looked with something of doubt on the faith of one reared in Catholic France ; but they queried no longer when I repeated the faith-creed Father St. Claire had

translated from an old Latin manuscript, and
given me the day of my first communion.

“ As on fair wings
The dove upsprings,
So to the soul is given,
Beside the cross
Through pain and loss,
Swiftly to fly toward heaven.
The cross, where died
The Crucified,
Is now our refuge sure ;
His wounds displayed,
The debt is paid,
Our pardon is secure.

“ By wounds most sweet,
In hands and feet,
By blood that flowed for me,
By death of scorn,
Thou once hast borne,
Let me Thy soldier be !
In Thy dear heart
There be my part ;
While here I strive oppress ;
As timid dove,
Mourning its love,
Flees to the rock for rest.

“ Sweet spot to hide !
May I abide
Safe here forevermore ;

Here in youth rest,
In age be blest,
Linger till life is o'er ;
And then may I
Heavenward fly,
Partaker of full bliss ;
Who from Thy side,
Thou Crucified,
Have not withdrawn in this."

Like many another monk, Father St. Claire was something of an artist, and never weary of illuminating missal and sacred page, with emblem and device.

Sometimes, too, he essayed a bit of coarser work ; and to show the liberal mind of the man, it was he, who, in letters of gold, tender red, and heavenly blue, painted on the oaken panel over the entrance door of the Chateau, words that when I came to this English Hall, my husband ordered painted on the panel that surmounts the tiles,—all Scripture scenes,—that are set around our library chimney-place.

I hope they will indeed be the motto of our home.

“In essentials unity ;
In non-essentials liberty !
In all things, charity.”

Just here, I should say, that Father St. Claire was my tutor, as well as spiritual guide, and as we conned the pages of early history, he directed me, too, to many of the touching records of the early Christians ; the saints and martyrs, who believed the true spirit of a saint was the learning and the living of the Christ-taught doctrine, not to be ministered unto, but to minister ; the learning that the being lowly in heart, pure in thought, true in deed, steadfast in principle, were things demanding the conquering of the spirit, and not the mortification of the body.

This memory of Father St. Claire's interpretation of what a saint-like life means, leads me to determine, that if God ever sends into our home little children, I will call them after old saints, and pray that as I thus choose their names, the Spirit of divine love may help me to train them to be lowly in heart, like the good men and women for whom I call them.

So well I recall Father St. Claire's once saying, "Remember the most highly blessed of God among the children of men are the humble," and he sealed the words on my memory by linking them with the old legend that runs:

"Before the Lord revealed Himself to Moses on Mount Sinai, He told all the mountains that He purposed speaking to His elect servant on one of them. —And straightway all began to strain and stretch themselves, that they might seem high and worthy of the honor; Zion alone,—the mountain on which Jerusalem stands,—bowed and was humble.—To reward its humility the Lord commanded that all the other mountains should give of their trees, and plants, to grace and deck it."——

A legend cemented by the "striking peculiarity, that Palestine, the spot chosen by God for His revelation of religious truth to our race, and for the incarnation of the Saviour of mankind, presents within its narrow bounds the characteristics of climate and produc-

tions scattered elsewhere over all the habitable zones,—from the snowy north to the tropics.”

It was nearing the end of the day when Father St. Claire repeated this legend to me, and only a few short weeks before I left the Chateau home. We were looking off toward the ridge of hills to the northward of our boundary, tracing their dim forms through the here and there openings of the tree-boughs.

So well I loved those deep, restful glimpses of their blue and purple-tinted heights; especially when seen amid the folded mists, that were wont to be their gossamer-like covering well-nigh every night of early spring and summer, and that began to gather an hour or so before the gloaming, and when the harsher days of autumn and winter came, a heavier mist falling—or up-rising?

The dew falls from heaven,—and the mist uprises from earth,—there is such a deep spiritual truth hidden in their difference, just as there is in the angels ascending and descending Jacob’s ladder.—

But,—we must be careful as we seek it,
“not to let the angels obscure the ladder it-
self, or rather Him, whom the ladder symbol-
izes.”

VII.

I CONTINUE to copy from my mother's journal, and I will cull, and put together,—though they are widely separated in her record,—the first words she wrote after the birth of each of her children.—And then, I will straightway leave our babyhood, and take up my narrative again, returning to the time immediately following my father's death.

EXTRACTS.

It was a Sabbath morning when our Francis, my first-born, came to us, verily a gift from God.

October was the month.—For me the crown month of the twelve, for my wedding day had been in October only the year by-gone.

Little Francis is a child pleasant to behold even now in early infancy, with earnest lov-

ing eyes, out of which the soul of the little stranger looks with something of wistful longing.

Will he ever attain that for which his baby soul yearns?—and,—what is it?

Thus my mother-heart asks,—but no voice sounds from the future to tell me,—and yet, I know many a struggle awaits my child in the warfare of life.

Spite this knowledge, this baby look of aspiration is beautiful to me as a hope; verily seeming like the first of the hues of the bow of promise, that I pray may span my boy's future, till the perfect arch is complete at last.

May I not go beyond hope, and *believe* that it will, for is not “every inmost aspiration God's angel undefiled?”—And it is written, “their angels do always behold the face of the Father,”—surely then, that look is the reflection of angel guidance.

I think it is this gaze of earnestness in my baby's eyes, that decides me to call him by the name of Saint Francis of Spain; the story of whose holy and scholarly life has always

been dear to me, combined as it was with such mildness of disposition, and yet such staunch adherence to the right.

On my own christening day my parents gave me a gem-set ring, that I have worn ever since my finger was large enough, and I never gaze on it, without a consciousness of the motto they linked with it as I passed out of childhood.

Now I plan following this old French custom, and choosing for Francis a gem, with a meaning, and giving it to him on his christening day,—a custom I will continue if God sends more children into our home.

Deciding to do this, I sat in the twilight last night pondering what jewel stone to choose, when suddenly my attention was caught by the low lullaby nurse Bland was singing to my baby boy, and in its simple rhyme, I found an answer to my pondering.

The words were doleful indeed for a “sleep, baby, sleep” song, strange words too, for a cheerful-hearted woman like nurse Bland to hum.

“October’s child is born for woe,
And life’s vicissitudes must know.
But lay an opal on its breast,
And hope will lull the woes to rest.”

As she repeated the lines in a slower and lower cadence, I straightway remembered, according to the gem calendar, the opal, the stone of hope, belongs to October, and so I choose it for Francis; for I think in these lives of ours, we may find types in everything.

Another little voice has come to make music in our home; another baby son. Hugh, our second born; come with the spring, the dear little lad that is so strong of limb, and yet a baby who nestles so close to his mother’s heart; who meets my every look with an answering gaze of love.

Somehow I do not question and wonder about little Hugh’s future as I did when Francis came, and yet, baby that he is, already I can see he is strong of will,—quick of temper; a child who as he grows into boyhood will perchance often make his mother’s heart ache,

but with such love in his gaze, I think he will always heed my words.

Blessings on the darling, I hear him cooing and laughing even as I write, though his baby life spans but six brief months,—my joyous child; so brave of heart too, I know, why he stretches out his little arms with never a fear to strangers and friends alike; and when I take him with nurse, held safe in her strong arms, as we drive through the long village street, where the cottagers gather about the low pony carriage for a peep at his dark eyes and dimpled face, he smiles in response, not only on sweet rosy-cheeked children and fair maidens, but on the time-wrinkled faces of old people too.

Well may nurse sing to him, March's verse in her lullaby,

“Who on this world of ours their eyes
In March first open, shall be wise,
In days of peril firm and brave,
And wear a blood-stone to their grave.”

Well may I too choose March's jewel, for

his christening gem, with its significant meaning,—courage. I said I did not question of this child's future; did not peer into the dim unknown years,—and yet,—yet, for what will my boy need courage?—

Will he be tried like the Saint Hugh who from the cradle seemed to be what I call Hugh, a “child of benediction,” and yet whose heart was tried, whose faith was tested, by the discipline of sharp pain?—

I am glad the years are silent, glad I hear no answer.

We left England last autumn for a winter's tarrying in this sunny land of Italy, and here, —where the skies are so blue,—here, within sight of the gleaming waters of the Arno, that flow far down in the valley, with a noiseless flow, silent as thought, as it seems to me, looking from the windows of our villa; here, within sight of the steep heights of Fiesole, with its “crown of monastic walls and cypresses”; here, within the shadow of the mighty dome, within sound of the bells of Florence; in this

city, where art and nature harmonize, God sent Zita to us.

Like Hugh, she is a child of the spring, and with eyes dark as his, and a heart as tender, I think,—my April-born daughter, with a diamond for her gem, and

“ This stone
Emblem of innocence is known,”

thus nursesey sings.

Before choosing a name for this little daughter, I spent many an hour in looking over the histories of saintly women, with which the libraries in Florence abound; and of all the records, the story of Saint Zita is to me the fullest of details, in which I would fain find an echo in my child's life.

For the old record tells, how this long-ago Zita was a tender-hearted child, with a mind naturally replete with religious thoughts and desires, and how, while still in early girlhood, she determined never to lose sight of God in her deeds; and thus as she grew older, her greatest happiness was in works of charity

and kindness, her heart being pervaded with that sweet spirit of love that excused the faults of others, while wide awake to her own,—one of those women

“Who never found fault with you, never implied
You wrong, by her right, and yet men at her side,
Grew nobler, girls purer,—and—children gladder.”

A woman possessed of a

“Simple noble nature, credulous
Of what she longed for, good in friend or foe.”

This was the Zita for whom I named my Zita, and whom I pray she may resemble.

Four little birdlings in our nest now, for Eulalie has come,—a winter-heralded child, a frail little creature, that came with December's first snow-fall, a snow-drop in purity of heart; I can see it in her baby face; a child of quickly varying moods, too, that also I see; and her eyes, though they are dark as my Zita's, and large, almost too large for a baby face, have the same look in them that shone from Francis' blue orbs.

Yes, a "whole future" sometimes seems hidden in their depths, or rather gazing forth from the light in her baby soul.

My husband smiled when I told him she was to be called Eulalie, but he did not say nay, and his smile grew tenderer as I repeated the old legend of Saint Eulalie, who came as our baby did, when the pure white snow was falling from the December's sky; falling in feathery flakes, like lily buds shaken from the clouds, but that as they reached the earth, were changed into the form of white doves, that went flocking and soaring upward again.

Eulalie! my little Eulalie, God grant she too may be pure as a lily, gentle as a dove, sweet in disposition as Saint Eulalie. I am glad the turquoise, blue as the sky, is the emblem gem of her birth-month, glad nurse sings for her,

"If cold December gave you birth,
The month of snow and ice and mirth,
Place on your hand a turquoise blue,
Success will bless whate'er you do."

Glad, I repeat, that blue is her color; I never can divest myself of the fancy that colors in a certain way are types of our lives, or characters, and that we each mystically represent the qualities of some special color.

I suppose this feeling of mine is akin to that which leads some people to find an immediate suggestion of certain friends, in certain flowers.

Blue, it is such a beautiful emblem of a woman's heart and nature, according to tradition, the type of constancy; and "the color, too, of the atmosphere, when saturated with sunshine."

I thought my heart and hands were as full as mother heart and hands could be; but no, there is room, plenty and plenty, for the little strangers, Maud, "star-sweet" blue-eyed Maud; and Herbert, the twin brother, as like to Maud in feature, as rose is like to rose, when both are fair and beautiful, as like in heart I believe, too, as two souls can be.

Another birth to record,—my Yvo's—dark-

eyed and strong of limb like Hugh ; Yvo, whom we name for that saint of Brittany, that man so tender of heart, that he was called the lover of the poor ; so pitiful of suffering, that the sick were his care ; the oppressed his charge.

Saint Yvo, who taught,

“ Uphold the Christ,
Ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
Speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
Lead sweet lives in purest chastity.”

This was the saint for whom we named our Yvo.

It was Valentine's day, the day of love and gladness, when God sent Bridget, our little Britta, with the blue eyes, rosy cheeks, and the laughing, dimpled mouth,—Britta our joy now in her babyhood.

Will she, as the years come, be like Ireland's Saint Bridget, “our shining light,” because of her virtues?

And will darkness be needed to reveal the glow of that spiritual light?

Foolish mother-heart, questioning still,—
striving to look into the future and know its
story for my eighth-born child, as I did for
my first-born!

VIII.

PASSING over the years that intervene between the records of our infancy and my father's death, I resume, as I said I would, my tale at a date close following that dreary March day, which dawned for us, laden with the sad intelligence of our loss.

And I turn to my mother's journal again, for I find underlying and running through it, a golden thread of meaning, that gives a deeper significance to this simple story of a family, than I had thought to find when Francis bade me write it out.

What is this golden thread, do you ask? an echo, I reply, that he who listens may hear, if he hearkens in the spirit with which my mother interpreted the lives of her children; and which filled her dear heart with a sweet

assurance, that in a certain way we each possessed some of the traits and characteristics of the men and women in memory of whom she named us, and that verily made us echoes of them; though perchance it were in that somewhat mystical way, in which the sea-shell holds in its faint musical murmur an echo of the sea.

For remember, these men and women, were called saints in that highest use of the word when applied to men and women; and that holds a liberty that is bounded by a spiritual outlook wide enough, because founded on the Rock of Ages, not to be afraid to meet the truth, "that almost every great saint in the Bible is recorded to have fallen into sin,"—and, "that mere untried virtue does not deserve the name, neither can they be said to have a moral character that have not been tempted, that the struggle toward the good, that has been lost, is the source of all that is most noble."

Broad and tender enough too, to remember "where sin abounded, grace did much more

abound,—and His grace is sufficient,—made perfect in weakness.”

Thus, though she knew as none other did our frailties and our faults, our wanderings and our doubtings, our falls and our failures, still our mother called us, echoes of the saints of old, because it was through the recognizing of the conflict of right with wrong, good with evil, that she discovered this saint-likeness in our poor weak human hearts.

I seem to hear her dear voice now, saying, “Remember, ‘many a time the greatest use of a good deed is the doing it,’ ”—and when we failed, how often she encouraged us by the simple reminder, that if we had love in the soul, we need not be discouraged, even though good and evil seemed to grow in our hearts close together, as two flowers opening on the same stem.

But when mother thus encouraged us, she always bade us recollect too, that though “love is higher than duty, the reason is, that love in reality contained duty in itself. Love is duty, and something more. Love is a no-

ble tree of which duty is the trunk. Love is a beautiful plant, with a beautiful flower, of which duty is the stalk."

Just here I copy a chaplet of verses, that I think contain in very truth my mother's idea, when she talked of saints in this world of ours, with the same freedom and sureness with which we talk of violets, as we tell the tale of garden blooms.

"A heartfelt smile, a gentle tone,
A thoughtful word, a tender touch,
A passing act of kindness done;—
'Tis all, but it is much.

"The motions of a heart set free
From all-absorbing, selfish care;
A sweet concern, that seems to me
Like an unspoken prayer;

"A look that reads the inmost heart,
Yet not with scrutiny severe;
Not as of one who sits apart,
Nor knows our pain and fear;

"These are not things to win applause;
No earthly fame awaiteth such;
But surely by the heavenly laws
They are accounted much;

“And they, who give without restraint
Such gifts, and ask them not again,
What is there in the name of Saint
That they should not obtain?”

And now, with no more lingering, I turn
again to my mother's journal.

IX.

EXTRACTS CONTINUED.

AS I pen these pages, I feel like a voyager, whose little barque sets sail across a wide, flowing river, that is spanned by a moonlit path of golden, spray-kissed waves, and yet, more than once broken by foam crests.

But this is a metaphor that applies to my other children rather than to Francis.

For in gathering together memories that cluster about his life at the time of which I now tell, I feel more like one standing on ocean shore, watching the tide come in, sure that at last it will creep up and cover projecting rock and sandy beach, but yet wondering, why, while each wave gains a little, it straightway, too, falls back into the ocean of waves

and surging water, seeming verily a type of perpetual relapsing.

Yes, like relapsing waves my Francis' heart seemed then,—the soul of the youth, and young man, was so tried, so tossed about by question and doubt, disappointment and loss.

The look of eager yearning I had seen in his baby eyes all came back, only the peace in the child's gaze had gone from the youth's, had changed to restlessness, because he was one of those of whom it has been well written :

“ In seeking to undo
One riddle, and to find the true,
He knit a hundred others new.

“ The end and the beginning vexed
His reason ; many things perplexed
With motions, checks, and counter-checks.”

From childhood Francis had been a docile lad, scholarly and eager in his pursuit of knowledge, seldom showing more temper than a certain persistence, which hinted that under unfavorable influences he might possess something of obstinacy.

There had never been anything of despondency in his moods ; on the contrary, I had thought him of a hopeful temperament, though he was always inclined to more of serious reflection than the others of my group.

Hence I was totally unprepared for the change that seemed to come over my boy's nature, as suddenly as a thunder-cloud comes across the blue sky of a July day, and I was dim of faith then,—and so, as we are apt to do in nature's storms, I forgot that the blue is always behind the storm-clouds,—forgot, and I think this added to the sorrow of that time, that back, or rather underlying the doubts and rebellion that held sway in Francis' soul, were the principles that had been planted there from the days of babyhood,—forgot, that perchance he needed this sharp discipline to blow the chaff from the tender grain, to beat down the tares from among the slender seed-freighted stalks.

Mothers so need to read and re-read that old parable of the seed and the sower, before they grasp the hidden comfort in the fact it

reveals, that growth may be going on even though we see it not.

For it was not the seed which *forthwith* sprang up that at last bore the full grain in the ear.

And, there is need to remember, too, especially now, when thought is so broad of wing, its flight so boundless, the tender, deep, wisdom-full lesson held in the old saying, "There lives more faith in *honest* doubt, than in half the creeds."

But while careful to remember this, one must be mindful, too, to link it with the truth that should ever be its companion, as the right hand is companion to the left; and thus recollect, "that spiritual things can not be discerned as material things are discerned, or judged as material things are judged. That which is the object of *faith*, can not be the object of reason, much less can it be submitted to reason."

X.

CONTINUED EXTRACTS.

IT was no light thing to Francis to find himself no longer heir to the Glentwood estate, and yet this fact was clearly expressed in the terms of cousin Reginald's gift of the Hall, and near grounds, jointly to myself and children for our life-time.

Neither was it a light thing for a youth just on the threshold of manhood, to be brought suddenly face to face with the fact, that from the platform of affluent circumstances, he must step down, as it were, and henceforth in a great measure be dependent on self-support.

I confess at first my mother-heart shrank back too from this truth, but how often since have I given thanks for the very adversity and perplexity that accompanied our reduced

income; for surely it served to bring out and develop the true manhood of my sons, as prosperity hardly could have done.

March had glided into April, and April sped into May, before the time came for me to explain to my children in detail our altered circumstances.

And then,—because I can myself always bear trouble better when I am out in the sunshine—I told the troop at breakfast-time of a cloudless, sunshiny morning, that the livelong day should be a holiday, and that we would spend it in the woods, among the flowers and the birds; and spite the great shadow that had so recently fallen on our hearts and home, the young things, with the exception of Francis and Eulalie, were as gay as larks over my proposal.

When we started, the younger ones ran before us as light of foot as young fawns, and as we went through the park by the woodland path, that leads down to the river bank, they were happy as sunbeams, and all through the morning, I never once checked their mirth

and glee. Neither did I when, at high noon, we climbed the steep path leading up to Zita's "Switzerland," and sought shelter in the rustic cottage, where kind nurse Bland, aided by Jane the maid, had spread a bountiful lunch for the older brothers and sisters, and the hungry little birdlings, that looked like spring flowers, or flower fairies; for Britta was garlanded with cowslips, Maud crowned with golden-hued daffodils, Herbert and Yvo armed with meadow-grasses and reeds, tipped with daisies.

I thought it best that even the youngest should hear what I had to tell, and so when the last bun was eaten, the last horn cup of snowy milk emptied, I bade nurse and Jane return to the Hall with the empty hampers, saying, I would come with the children later on.

Then we left our high perch, and went down again to the river bank.

As the day had lengthened, the sunshine had not waned, only grown softer, falling in golden bands aslant the bank-sides of the

river's brink,—the river, in whose clear water the shadows of tree and overhanging bush were reflected as distinctly as a pure soul is reflected on a calm, holy face.

All about was peaceful, the birds singing still, but songs in a softer key than their morning notes; the air was full of fragrance, laden with the sweet odors of flowering vines, vernal grass, and the perfume from a hundred flower-cups, that was wafted out by the gently stirring breeze.

It was all like a pastoral for beauty and peace,—and my children, they were to me fair and beautiful as idyls,—the bright young things, so fresh and joyous; as I looked at them I straightway remembered one of the quaint fancies or legends that Father St. Claire used to tell me in the days of my youth. These legends, all through my life they have been wont to come back to me, seeming oftentimes like flowers, shining on my pathway with a spirit of sweet meaning, that has made it easier to tread; that has made me smile sometimes, too, one of those smiles that are

like echoes to sighs, and yet none the less dear because of the sigh.

Smile, I say, something as one does when their way leads through the grain and corn fields,—the realities of life,—and yet they spy in among the cereals the blue-eyed corn flowers, looking up with their delicate leaves fringed as daintily as the far-famed blue gentian of New England's rugged coast, which seems to us old England inhabitants a flower of wondrous rare beauty,—or they see peeping out, the star-shaped, golden-hearted purple-leaved little blossoms that upspring a trio on a stalk among the waving grain.

But to return to the legend that came into my memory as I sat there on the river bank, looking at my children, and wondering how their young hearts would respond to my tale.

It was only that oft-told and familiar story of "how Apollo met the Muses and the Graces playing on a flowery mead, in sweet sport mixed with earnest, while Memory, the grave and noble mother of the Muses, watched their pastime,—and of how each of the four-

teen uttered a line of verse, Apollo beginning, and then the nine Muses singing their part, while the three Graces warbled each in turn, till at last a low sweet strain from Memory made an harmonious close,—and all the poets all the world over knew that the first sonnet had been made.”——

This was the legend I recalled, and it came to me with a sweet significance, casting a song-like hope over the future,—for,—though mother and children as we were, we never could sing a perfect song again,—for our Apollo, his voice was silent,—yet we could each sing a sweet strain of music, each make life a psalm, each develop and fulfill the purpose for which we were born.

And,——“the chief end of man is to glorify God.”

XI.

MOTHER'S JOURNAL STILL.

BEFORE I spoke of the facts which I had gathered my children around me to listen to, we had a talk about true wealth, and what it consisted in.

In reply to my saying, it was something more to be treasured than broad acres and ancestral estates, Eulalie nestled her head down on my shoulder, and said:

“Yes, indeed, mamma, for what is the value of our beautiful park and the dear old Hall, in comparison to the value of the love in your heart for us.”

“True enough,” responded Hugh, in his clear, ringing voice, “‘the affections of the heart are property’; but let me tell you, little sister, broad acres and ancestral domains are not to be lightly esteemed.”

And gaily the lad pelted Eulalie with the cowslip balls Zita was twining in rounded beauty for the young ones, that were sitting on the grass at her feet.

Yet though it was Hugh who answered thus, he was the one who rebounded first when I went on to tell that the broad acres and ancestral domains, which he deemed of such value, were no longer mine or my children's.

It was Hugh, too, who took up the thread of my narrative,—such a dark, sombre-hued thread,—and by his bright spirit and cheer-laden words, inwove with it a shining thread that straightway served to cast into shadow the somewhat gloomy tints of mine.

As is wont to be the way, when hearts and lives are young, that “one touch of hope was enough to lift them from earth like wings,”—all but Francis,—the gloom did not pass from his face.

As we walked home, our steps were slower than in the morning, and my children spoke, too, in softer voices, and their words were more earnest.

There was double reason for this, for apart from what I had told them, memories of our loss in their dear father's departure from earth, were apt to come to my tender-hearted sons and daughters with a deeper meaning when the day was near its ending.

And there is something quieting, too, in the influence of the time, a peculiar tenderness in that hour; the twilight bridge that spans from day to night.

When home was reached, and the younger ones had said good-night and closed their bright eyes in the sweet, peaceful slumber of innocent childhood, (dear children, they held the daisy flowers, the daffodils, and cowslips they had gathered in their dimpled hands, even while they slept, nurse could not say them nay), my older sons and daughters, the four who understood as the little ones could not, the full import of my words, sat with me for long on the vine-embowered veranda.

And it was then, that we talked of the future; then, that I caught the first note of that bitterness that had already found a

lodging place in my Francis' heart; then, that Zita made glowing word-pictures for us, in which we every one had a mission to fulfill.

Change so quickly asserts itself, and most of us are so wonderfully created with an adaptiveness to it, that before that month of June had passed, to an outward observer, we had all settled down calmly into the routine of regular occupations, and were apparently undisturbed by our altered circumstances.

But during that month, I, the mother, had made discoveries in the true characters and hearts of my children, that made them dearer to me than ever before, though verily I had thought them always as dear as dear could be. Francis, with but few words, but a resolution in his tone that precluded remonstrance, had informed me and his guardian, cousin Reginald, that he had decided on the life of a scholar, and that authorship was his goal; while Hugh, with less of self-assertion, but no less eagerness, claimed cousin Reginald's influence in securing an appointment in his

father's old regiment, a position for which application was made in due time.

Thus, with Hugh's quick fancy, aided by Zita's bright imagination, many an hour of that summer time did the lad spend in picturing himself a true knight, a defender of his country, and champion of the oppressed.

All the impulses of Hugh's nature responded to these dreams, and no sooner was the promise—when he attained the proper age—of his commission secured, than he began a careful study of the geography and history of India, with special reference to recent campaigns in that country of lurking danger and treacherous foe.

Little Yvo caught the spirit of Hugh's enthusiasm, and child though he was, he too began to dream, and plan for a manhood, "that would help other people," as he expressed it, and relieve the suffering.

But when battle and carnage were discussed by the elder ones, always this dear child would nestle close to my side, whispering, "But, mamma, I would rather relieve suf-

fering like the kind surgeon that bound up father's wounds, than make it, as the soldiers do."

"And you shall, you darling," Zita was wont to reply; "you shall care for the sick and the wounded, with the skill of a wise, well-trained, tender-hearted surgeon, and I will go and nurse them, like a sister of charity"; and gaily she would twist the snowy cambric of her handkerchief into counterfeit of a high-crowned sick-nurse regulation cap, and fasten, like a Puritan maiden, a spotless kerchief across her drooping, graceful shoulders, to make the picture complete.

The children called Zita those days their prophetess, for she made plans for them all. Eulalie was to be a rich lady, loving and beloved; Eulalie, whom the grateful people should call, "Eulalie the Good."

Francis by the power

"Of his sweet minstrelsy,
Some hearts for truth and goodness should gain,
And charm some grovellers to uplift their eyes
And suddenly wax conscious of the skies."

Hugh was to be the hero brother—

“A beacon light to all the rising youth,
The perfect pattern of a Christian knight,
The noblest hero of the noblest age;”

and Herbert, the one we all called our little clergyman, he was such a devout, true-souled child, for him Zita prophesied

“The reward of looking back on life,
The fight well fought, the race well run, to see
That all things true and good were wrought in God;”

while for Maud, who was so like to Herbert in devoutness of disposition, and earnestness of purpose, Zita whispered,

“Hopes each more sweet than each,
. . . . Like the whispers of the leaves
That tremble round the nightingale.”

To Yvo, always she spoke of him, who “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses,” and it was she, who taught the little lad that motto, that is ever graven on the shield of the true physician, “They serve God best, who serve His creatures most.”

What is that shield?—Verily a brave heart, a true soul, a pure purpose, a tender pity. And, are not these his safety and protection, surer than ever shield wrought of well-tried metal, and made by hand of most skillful workmen?

Zita thus defined it, as she talked one eventide with the children out on the lawn, in the sunset glow, and when Yvo begged her for a verse for his profession, smilingly she said:

“Gently and kindly ever at distress
Melted to more than woman’s tenderness,
Yet firm and steadfast at his duty’s post.”

As for Britta, the sunny, bright-tempered, joyous-hearted child, Zita said her name held her future, as her dear little face did, our little maid:

“With wondrous eyes,
Not afraid, but clear and tender,
Blue, and filled with prophecies.”

For herself my Zita prophesied no future; but often those days I saw a look in her eyes that made me know my daughter would be indeed a true sister of charity, not only to

her own home circle, but to the great family of men and women, brothers and sisters, needing help all the wide world over.

Often I heard her singing to herself too in a voice clear as a lark's, the song of a sunbeam and dew-drop—and, was not that a prophecy?

“O sunbeam, O sunbeam !

I would be a sunbeam too !

When the winter chill

Hushes lark and rill ;

When the thunder-showers

Bow the weeping flowers ;

When the shadows creep,

Cold, and dark, and deep ;

I would follow swift and bright,

Blending all my love and light,

Chasing winter grim and hoary,

Shining all the tears away ;

Turning all the gloom to glory,

All the darkness into day.

“O dew-drop, O dew-drop,

I would be a dew-drop too !

When the fatal glow,

Sultry, still and slow,

Makes the scentless flowers

Droop in withering bowers,

Leaf and shade and bloom
Touched with early doom ;
I would follow, sweet and bright,
Blending life and love and light ;
Making what was parched and dreary,
Glad and lovely, fresh and fair,
Softly cheering what was weary,
Sparkling, starlike, everywhere."

XII.

AS I copied from my mother's reminiscences this morning, I sat in her favorite nook,—the alcove retreat; and every time I glanced up I caught the outside view reflected in the mirror.

A dreary scene; rain had been falling since noon the day before, and the tree boughs hung heavy, drooped low from the weight of the thousand drops that had fallen upon the tender leaves.

Yet there is music to me in the friendly patter of the little drops against the window-pane, and a sense of comfort in looking forward to a quiet morning, undisturbed by incomers from the outer world.

I began these memories with an idea of dividing them into eight parts, but I find I can not do so; for while we all are as distinctly

defined as separate stars, yet the story of one unfolds the story of another, and as Francis would not have been what he is without Hugh, so on through the eight we all seem living illustrations of the Bible truth, that "no man liveth or dieth to himself."

This self-hood!—what a wonderful, complex thing it is; and the living and the dying, how involved the one with the other.

"I die daily," wrote St. Paul, and we know that he meant death to self. "Create in me a new heart,"—that is, a new life, wrote David, and we know equally well what he meant.

But I will continue my mother's story, passing on a page or two beyond the last extracts I find written :

I said we settled down into our regular life again, almost before the summer that followed that spring-time, marked by sorrow and change, had fully opened, and to a stranger my group would have seemed happy and light of heart again.

But my mother-eyes looked deeper, and

before the midsummer holidays had half elapsed, I saw my brood from the oldest to the youngest needed change; so with naught more of preparation than a brief day of planning and packing, we left home on a bright sunshiny morning, and before the bridge of noon had been crossed by more than two or three hours, we found ourselves comfortably ensconced in one of the quaintest of the many quaint houses, that are nestled like birds' nests in tree boughs, among the wooded hills that shelve down to the waters' edge of Dartmouth Haven.

Our approach to the Bay had possessed the delight of a perpetual surprise to my young folk, for more than once suddenly its exit to the sea seemed closed in by the enfolding hills and projecting rocks, while its blue waters appeared like the calm surface of some inland lake.

As I told my Zita, it strongly reminded me of the beautiful Italian lake where we spent the first summer of her life.

We,—ah, that happy we,—never to be again

on earth in its rounded fullness, for then it included my husband.

But I did not let the young things catch a hint of my heart-ache,—only Eulalie, with the quick, sympathetic instinct of her sensitive nature, divined it,—and she stole her hand into mine, as I uttered that *we*, and looked up with a smile that was tender, and so like her father's smile. I had chosen Dartmouth as our holiday retreat, partly because it was a quiet, little frequented place, and partly because it combined so many attractions for the different tastes of my sons and daughters.

But chiefly I had thought of Francis; my heart was sore about the youth; he seemed to have drifted even in a few short weeks so far away from me, a veil of reserve had sprung up between us, a something as impalpable as the gray mist that half obscures the landscape on a summer's morning, but that was enough to make a mother's heart ache.

And I had a feeling that perchance the fresh, breezy air from the wide open water beyond the Bay, would serve to blow it away

from his young spirit, something as the sunshine always served to lift clouds from my own heart.

Then, too, there is so much of interest to an eager, inquiring mind in all that region, I knew if nature failed to please and divert my lad, he would find pleasure in the study of Dartmouth's two churches, the one so unlike the other.

The very first evening, while Hugh, the sisters, and little brothers were as happy as seagulls, running hither and thither on the sandy beach that stretched out at ebb tide from below the grassy terraces of our landlady's garden, Francis and I wandered away through the narrow streets that led toward the harbor part of the town, and to the rock on which is built the picturesque little church of Saint Petrocks.

More than once on our way we paused to examine some curious gable-end, richly-corniced old dwelling, the front of which displayed grotesque carving in wood; or to smile at the irregularly built lesser houses that

edged the steep and narrow roadway, the lower tiers frequently connecting with those above by flights of steps.

When at last we stood within shadow of the church porch, the golden glow of the summer evening was resting like a glory on earth, sky, and ocean.

Below the church uprose the embattled towers and turrets of Clifton Castle, while on the opposite eminences, through the embowering woods, we caught glimpses of the remains of old fortifications, and south of the castle, on a still lower site, and nearer the sea, the mouldering keep of the Castle of Kingsweare.

It was the hour for the even-song, and soft and low came floating out to us from within the little church, the tender notes of the organ, and the sweet, bird-like voices of the chanting choristers.

A melody, that only lasted for a minute, and then the small congregation came out reverently into the glow of the ending day, and with countenances on which a peaceful calm rested, turned homeward.

There were scarce a dozen in all, and they mostly old women, only one maiden among them, a fair-haired, slender girl, with a light step, that sped swiftly down the steep cliff path.

She turned for a second on passing us, and she answered my smile with an answering smile,—nevertheless there was a shadow on her face, a look in her eyes, that told her even-song had been a prayer for some sailor lad who tarried long on the wide sea,—so long, the heart of the maiden needed to pray. This was my first sight of Annice Lee.

Then came the chorister boys, followed by the white-haired rector, who bowed in kindly greeting, and last the sexton ; he lingered for a word, and bade us welcome to the church, as though it had been his own.

And then Francis and I were left alone. Meanwhile the glow had deepened ; the golden light melted into a tender violet hue, the summer night was drawing near, the shadow of the hills was on the water.

All was silent save the faint sound of a boatman's oar, and the low cadence of a

boatman's song, that floated up from below the cliff where the waters were so calm.

A sweet fragrance filled the air. It was an hour of perfect harmony in nature, and as though to complete the beauty of it all, suddenly up from behind the castle tower and the background of woody hills, the clear, full moon rose, sending a quiver of golden light across the peaceful waters of the bay, crowning the old ruin opposite, the rugged cliffs, and wooded heights, with a radiance softer than sunshine.

Silently we stood for long amid the beauty and the wonder of it, and then I told Francis, we too must turn homeward, but our steps were slower than Annice Lee's, and my boy found voice to say much he had been silent about during the last weeks, as together we went, mother and son, hand in hand, down the steep cliff path.

I knew it was easier for him to speak when I was close by him thus, and he held my hand, and touch could in a measure take the place of sight.

I knew the lad could tell me better, of the things nearest his heart, when the light was dim, giving in a certain way a sense of spiritual invisibility, even while the voice told of the things that belonged to the spirit.

It was not much Francis had to tell, but after it, we never drifted quite so far apart again. It was only how there had come bitterness, rebellion, and doubt into his young soul. When I asked him what he questioned, whence the bitterness, why the rebellion, he could scarcely tell.

Only he knew that he had passed out of the happy time, when his heart and voice could join with mine and his brothers and sisters, as at night and morning we

“ Raised the lofty chant,
Or read the records of the saints of God,
Or told the tale that never waxes old,
The great good news, of all the works of Christ.”

Only he knew he had met that great throbbing, pulsing question, the mystery of life, and he could not seize and hold it, he could no more sound it than he could the waters of

the Bay fathoms deep, it seemed to him a strange, pathetic, almost phantasmal thing, and yet it had never seemed so solemn, and so real, as during the last months.

"And you never can grasp it," I told my boy ; "always the unknown must be about you. Can you understand the wide ocean, the stars, the great hills, the wind, that bloweth where it listeth, and no man knoweth whence it cometh, or whither it goeth?"—Thus I asked him.

I told him too, that he was starting on a road to which there was no end, that "the same conflict on which he was entering had been going on for ages, and yet was no nearer a conclusion than it was in the beginning," and softly I whispered, "Remember, Francis, he that trusts, is greater than he that proves."

He said nothing more. We were treading the streets of the town again, in a minute we were beyond it; and then, just before us, encircled by the moonlight, stood Zita and Eulalie holding wide open the wicket gate, that led into our landlady's flower-bordered garden, where grew tree-like fuchias, hanging

heavy with their bell-like blossoms, and scarlet geraniums, thousand-leaved roses, deep pink and red, making warm patches of color in the silvery gleam of the moonshine.

The younger ones were fast asleep, tucked away in their snowy coverleted beds, dreaming dreams of the beautiful to-morrow. Hugh, my friendly son, was chattering merrily to a group of fisher folk, that were smoking their pipes, and spreading their nets to dry, down on the sandy beach; thus only Zita and Eulalie were watching for our coming.

Zita, who was all enthusiastic over the wonders of the shore, that she had discovered even in that brief time; her hands were laden with treasures, tangled bits of sea-weed, rosy red and fairy green,—while Eulalie, she had the look of a mermaid, as she stood there in the moonlight.

What thought was in her heart I wondered.

“I have been listening to the sea, mother,” she said, “listening in silence.”

What voice had it held for my child? Her heart was young, life was bright and beauti-

ful to her, the angel that beckoned her on was Hope.

The silence, had it

“Music brought
From the spheres ! as if a thought
Having taken wings did fly
Through the reaches of the sky ? ”

I too listened to the voice of the sea that night.—

But,—its whisper to me, was a far different strain from the music-full murmur my child heard.

For as I hearkened, over and over it sighed, that plaintive dirge of a lonely, widowed heart :

“Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, oh sea !
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.”

XIII.

CONTINUED EXTRACTS FROM MY MOTHER'S JOURNAL.

THE morrow dawned a day beautiful as the children had dreamed; and it was the prelude to a full month of beautiful days, every one laden with happiness to my flock, spite Zita's accident; and the occasional ruffling of tempers, and conflict of wills, which among eight were wont to occur, reminding one of the little puffs of wind that would suddenly come and play for a minute over the blue waters of the Bay, stirring a thousand tiny waves, but never one that tossed high enough to be foam-crested.

Looking back on that time,—so brief, only a month,—I wonder at all it held for me and mine.—Sometimes as I recall those swiftly speeding hours, I feel they were verily

like the days in which a sower scatters with a generous hand seeds, that are to upspring in after days, with plants that are bud, flower, and at last fruit-laden, for they came freighted with life-long influences to us every one.

Bud, flower, and fruit! There is something deeply significant in this progression, a type of life, in its threefold development.—For, do we not smile when the bud opens into flower, just as we smile when children pass into youth,—and do we not sigh when the flower fades and falls, just as we sigh when youth begins to fade before the approach of age?

But we might smile with never a sigh at all, all the way on from bud to ripened garnered fruit, if we did but remember the sacred meaning of the type held in the truth, that “the flowers fade and fall, but a flower is only the means by which the fruit is formed,” and “our existence here is but a daily dying, a continual production of a blossom, within whose petals as they wither is expanding the immortal fruit.”

I had not wished to make any acquaintances on coming to Dartmouth, but events so seldom are counterparts to our wishes, a fact I learned the very first morning after our arrival.

When alone with the children I could be cheerful, their joys were so mine; then I knew too if my husband could have spoken to me, he would have wished it so; I knew he would have said it was thus I could best show my love for him.

But the presence of strangers somehow seemed to hurt me; I seemed to lose the power of making an effort; I could not bear to see little children climb about their father's knee, young maidens cling to a father's hand, or sons hearken to his words; I could not bear to see wives, happy wives, looking up to their husbands with eyes full of calm content, and restful confidence.

It was not that I begrudged them their happiness,—but,—but,—

It was for this reason, that morning, when groups of pleasure-seekers were beginning

to assemble about the quay and on the sandy beach, that I left my little people with nurse; and with Francis, Hugh, Zita, and Eulalie, turned inland, away from the blue waters of the Bay that were beginning to be dotted with many a gaily decorated pleasure craft, vessels that spread wide before the summer breeze their white-winged sails, and that far outstripped the fisher boats that were sailing seaward too.

A brave little fleet of work-day boats, with broad sails unfurled, sails that glowed in rich umber and brown hues, as the sunlight brought out the color hidden in the shadow below the cliff, a shadow out of which they floated on to the sapphire sea as birds float skyward.

It was a picturesque sight, all bright, brilliant, and breezy with pleasure and anticipation. It was morning!—three little words that mean so much.

All the many joyous people that came out from the houses that lined the craggy hill that overlooked the Bay for a mile or more, were

pleasure-seekers,—smiling people,—and yet more than one face sobered as their gaze rested for a moment on my heavy widow's mourning, and my children's sombre garments of sorrow.

Yes, there were tears, I think, in more than one mother and wife's eyes, as they passed us. Human sympathy, it is such a dear thing, so wide-spread, so quick to awake,—and alas, the heart-ache of sorrow and loss is so universal, even the faces which smile the gayest, well-nigh every one carries its echo in their hearts.

It was Francis who chose our path,—the very one he and I had trod the evening before, only now he led beyond St. Petrock's to the older, more spacious church of St. Saviour's, the pride of all the neighboring countryside, an imposing edifice, dating back to Edward the Third's time. A church built cathedral-wise, and possessing considerable beauty. Its chief ornament its altar piece, the pulpit and ancient wooden screen, with its rood-loft at the extreme of the chancel.

It was past the hour for morning service.

We thought the church deserted save for the presence of ourselves; thus we started, as we stood before the stone pulpit, admiring the enrichments carved in wood, and evidently of a later date, that had been added to it, when suddenly breaking the hush, a voice sounded, as distinct and clear as the note of a bell, though the speaker was at the far end of the building:

““ Every gift we receive is but a promise; every beauty we behold but a prophecy; every pleasure we enjoy but a foretaste.’ ”

These were the first words we heard Mr. Ward speak.

As I recall them I turn back to the thought with which I began to write on the opposite page, and repeat; they, and what came after them, were verily like a handful of fruit-bearing seed, scattered broadcast on my own and my children's minds and hearts.

And yet, as the seed fell, I do not think we heeded it any more than the earth seems to heed the golden grain the sower lets fall on the dull earth-clods.

Only when it had rooted did we know it had fallen.

A minute later Mr. Ward and his companions came round from the other side of the pulpit, and there we met, and there we would have parted with a bow of passing courtesy, but at that second, Zita gave a sharp cry of pain.

She was always as eager after information as a bee after honey, and seeking to decipher a baffling inscription encircling one of the wooden panels, she had sped up the stone steps of the pulpit, when startled by the sight of a stranger, she had slipped and fallen.

In a moment we were all gathered about her, mother, brothers, sister, and strangers.

A sprained ankle and bruised face were the extent of Zita's injuries, but they were enough to immediately break down the English reserve, that was so characteristic of the Wards, as we afterward discovered.—And that hour was the dawning hour of a friendship with them, that has been so precious to me and mine.

We found these kindly strangers familiar habitués of the seaport town, and lodgers, too, in the very next house to our landlady's.

Hugh also speedily discovered that they knew cousin Reginald's branch of the Glentwood family, and that we were not strangers to them, at least by name.

The getting Zita back to the cottage was no easy task, but she was brave of heart, and made light of pain.

It was Mr. Ward who went for a surgeon, and kind Miss Anna, who rubbed the poor little bruised and swollen foot till he came. Miss Anna, too, who, when the peace of evening fell, came and sat for an hour with "our prisoner," as the children called Zita,—Grace was with her,—Grace, a maiden the age of my Eulalie.

We formed another acquaintance, too, that day, and that was with Annice Lee, the girl with whom I had exchanged a smile as she passed down the cliff path after even-song at Saint Petrock's the night before.

XIV.

EXTRACTS CONTINUED.

THOSE new friends of ours, Miss Anna Ward, her brother, and Grace—the younger sister—possessed charms for us all, and before a week had passed they filled much the same place in the pleasure of our days that sunshine fills in the landscape. Mr. Ward was a hard-worked London curate, to whom this time of rest was a holiday, in the fullest sense of the word ; that broad sense that drops the *i* into a *y*, and reads holy-day, for he looked behind, and touched the sacred meaning hidden in nature's beauty and grandeur, as well as in human experiences, whether of joy or sorrow.

Hence

“two worlds were his,”
“The mystic heaven and earth within,
. . . . The sea and sky,—without.”

And both worlds had a heart to this earnest-minded young man, whose daily life for full two years past had brought him into close contact with a sterner, harsher side of existence than I or my children had ever dreamed of.

Nevertheless his nature was as fresh, his power of abandonment to the enjoyments that abounded on that coast, and near inland country, as complete as my lads; the only difference was, the older man looked farther, saw more than the younger ones.

He was many-sided, too, and endowed with a quick discernment of character, which led him to give individual sympathy and interest.

Thus, with Francis, he talked of the questions which were stirring my lad's soul; he straightway detected his inner unrest; and how the youth, from more than usual moral earnestness, had been brought to a stand-still in his childhood's beliefs, and “plunged into

reverie before the mysterious phenomenon of human life,—evil,—that dark shadow which casts a gloom over every circle of life, which meets us in the past history of our race, betrays its presence in the present, and lurks in the inmost recesses of our own being.”

Mr. Ward did not contend with this struggle going on in Francis’ mind; he did not strive to meet and answer his queries and speculations by any prescribed formula of belief; on the contrary, he frankly acknowledged

“The Truth is vast,
And never was there creed embraced it all.”

And steadily every day of that month of days Francis’ friendship for the young curate grew.

Hugh’s sympathy and warm admiration had been won from the first hour of meeting, for Mr. Ward loved the free life of hill and ocean almost as well as my young athlete did. He was a man of splendid physique, too, strong and muscular, of a ruddy Saxon type, well

calculated to win the loyal devotion of an enthusiastic lad like Hugh.

Many were the times during that month that I watched the two run down the steep cliff path, in the early morning, for a plunge in the stilly pool of a rocky inlet, and then off for a row across the broad channel, and back before the silvery peal of St. Saviour's morning chimes sounded to wake the world up.

I can see the tiny skiff now as it shot across the Bay, the long, steady sweep of the oars keeping time, and speeding it on its way like a flying bird.

There were inland rambles, too, summer days spent on the breezy hills, where the purple heather grew like a violet mist, or amid the ivy-grown ruins.

Excursions in which the whole troop joined, even to little Britta, only Zita and Miss Anna left out.

For poor Zita could go no further than to the rocky ledge, at the east of the garden boundary.

The sprain proved such an obstinate wrench

she had to be helped even that short distance. Our brave, cheerful Zita, who never once complained, but speeded our going and coming with smiles.

Long talks she and gentle Miss Anna had those days, and when I asked her once what they talked about, she smilingly responded :

“ Our mirror is a blessed book,”—

.

“ Held up to the sun,
It needs an eagle’s gaze,
So perfectly the polished stone
Gives back the glory of his rays ;

“ Turn it, and it shall paint as true
The soft green of the vernal earth,
And each small flower of bashful hue,
That closest hides its lowly birth.”

And though she did not quote further from Keble’s lines, I knew from her look that she had

“ Happy hours of heavenward thought ! ”

I knew, led by this gentle Miss Anna,

“Heaven to her gaze opened wide,
And brightest angels to and fro,
On messages of love did glide
’Twixt God above, and Christ below.”

There were long talks, too, in which we all joined as we sat together on the cliff toward twilight; the hour when the softened light of evening was beginning to enfold—like wings of brooding love—the quiet town, the shadowed castle, the old churches, even while yet the far hill-tops were crested with the mellow silvery light of the lingering radiance of sunset, and arrow-like rays of brightness flashed in response from the tall masts of the vessels at anchor in the harbor, or played like good-night kisses on the white sails of the pleasure crafts, turning shoreward, as the day waned.

The younger children were wont to gather about us at these times, tired with play, their active little feet weary at last, their song-like voices hushed for awhile, as they listened, as children love to do, to the talk of the elders; listened with the sweet innocent souls of childhood, receiving into their young minds

what they could understand, just as the flower-bells an hour later would receive every drop of dew their tiny cups could hold.

And as we older people, myself, Miss Anna, and Mr. Ward, too, looked down on the up-turned faces of the listening children, surely we received full as much as they did.

For always in the innocent trustfulness of confiding childhood I think one finds "treasures of richer knowledge than is to be got from all the wisdom of books."

Thus the summer days came and went, till at last the month ended.

On the morrow we were to part, my children and myself to turn homeward to the old Hall, where every nook and corner, every tree and grass-blade, was as thickly wedded to memories, as the curious bits of conglomerate that studded the cliffs were starred with tiny yellow shells.

Mr. Ward and Miss Anna, they were to return to their life-work in the busy, crowded haunts of London's thickly populated East End.

And Grace, she was to be their song-bird, their daisy flower with a golden heart, all through the dreary winter days.

“When summer comes we will meet again” —thus the young things said to one another; thus by a hope they robbed the parting of its pain, as is the way with youth.

When the last evening came it was Eulalie, the most timid of my flock, who was yet the bravest.

For it was she who asked a question, more than once she and Zita had tried to ask Mr. Ward, but lacked the courage.

It was what he meant by the first words we had heard him utter that day in the church.

Eulalie paused as she repeated them, as though to add force to the interrogation in her tone,—something as a nightingale pauses in the refrain of his song.

““Every gift we receive is but a promise!”” she said, and then followed the unspoken why? which was as distinct as the undertone music of the sea, the sweetest music the waves hold, Zita was wont to say.

“‘Every beauty but a prophecy,’”—and again the unuttered, yet tangible, why?—

“‘Every pleasure we enjoy but a foretaste!’” As she said these last words, Eulalie looked up,—she had been looking down, tracing a quaint device in the drifted sand that had lodged at high tide on the rocky ledge on which we sat.

Looked up, and gave voice to her unspoken queries,—for,—“Tell me why?” she said—

But Mr. Ward did not tell; he only replied:

“You must learn for yourself, Miss Eulalie.” And as he spoke, he took the slender reed,—a bit of salt marsh grass, strong and firm of fibre,—from Eulalie’s hand, and he, too, traced on the sea sand,—the very next incoming tide washed the words he wrote away.—But plainly we every one read them, even to little Britta, who spelled them out letter by letter:

“Promise,—Prophecy,—Foretaste.”—

What did he mean, this hard-worked London curate?

Did he trace a parable for us there on the golden sand?

XV.

REMINISCENCES PENNED BY MY MOTHER AT
A SOMEWHAT LATER DATE.

THE night following Eulalie's question to Mr. Ward I fell asleep wondering what he meant, and I found no answer till the next day, when Annice Lee, by a few simple words, gave me the thread that unravelled his meaning.

Writing the name Annice Lee, reminds me, that I said we formed another acquaintance besides the Wards during the day following our arrival in the seaport town of Dartmouth, and it was with this very Annice Lee.

I never quite understood how the girl came to tell me her story while I was still a comparative stranger to her, yet she had not been in my service a full couplet of days when she told it.

But can any one understand the subtle at-

traction, that like the magnet with the needle, draws hearts together, breaks down barriers of natural reserve, and overleaps the differences of social position?

My outward acquaintance with the girl came about quite simply. Zita's accident made it necessary for me to engage a second maid to assist nurse Bland, and when I sought our landlady's advice, she immediately proposed and sent for Annice Lee to fill the place.

And she has been with me ever since in one capacity or another, always holding the position of an upper servant, and at the same time filling the place of a true friend,—she possesses such rare good sense, innate tact, and a certain wise as a serpent, yet harmless as a dove, spiritual wisdom.

More than once a word of hers has flashed like a beam of light illumining some perplexity that has hedged my path, and helping me to see how to remove it, without injuring the flowers that are wont to grow along-side of the weeds, in these earthly path-ways.

Annice began her story with no word of prelude,—neither did she apologize for its length.

She trusted me, and thus was sure of my interest.

She did not cease working as she told it ; all the time her hands were busy with the coarse twine, with which she was weaving the intricate web of knots and spaces of a hand-net for Yvo to use in the stilly pools and inlets, that were to be found at the base of the cliff, and along the shore of the Bay.

“As a child,” she said, “I lived in one of the houses in the second tier, above the quay, —our neighbors were mostly fisher-folk, like my father. I knew them every one, and as I grew older, never a trouble came knocking at a neighbor’s door, that it did not find our own on the latch, and cross our threshold too ; for somehow we fisher-folk were brought close together, the wives and mothers sharing the same anxiety during the storms that swept the coast, and the children knowing what head - winds, sudden squalls, reefs, and

breakers meant, even before they talked plain.

“But the trouble that came was not from the sea, or the storm, but from the fever, and hot wind, — the fever, before which strong men and women fell victims, as grain falls before a mower’s sickle, and my father and mother were among the first to go.”

Annice’s voice had grown softer, her hand trembled a bit as memory turned the leaf marked by those dark days.

Yet her voice was steady, as she continued, “Their graves are up there in the churchyard of St. Petrocks,”—and she shivered as she added, “It is such a comfort, ma’am, to see the green graves of those one loves; the sea!—it is such a wide,—such a lonely resting place, and it is such a dreary thing to look toward it at night and morning, and wonder, and wonder, if it is a grave,—or if,”—and she shivered again.

After a minute’s silence she resumed: “Somehow when God spoke so loud to me as He did, when my father and mother died, I

felt He must be very near, and I was not fearsome; I went about doing all I could for the neighbors who were left,—after that, there came a time of peace; every one was good to me,—and then, an evening, when the sunset glowed on the waters of the Bay, when every wave glittered and sparkled in the brightness, when a gallant ship with a strange rigging let loose its anchor in the harbor,——and,—there was a sailor lad among that crew, brave and bright as a sun-flash,—and,—and,——”

Annice did not tell me the close following story, but the mute pathetic way in which she let the twine she was knitting slip from her hands for a moment, as she stroked the slender ring on her finger, told it.—Yes, I knew the unsaid was only another version of that tale, that is as old as the hills, and the sea,—the tale of love and parting!——

“That vessel,” she went on to say, “from beyond the sea, lay there at anchor in the Bay, till the months counted full three,—then, as suddenly as the wind blows out of the north, its wide sails were spread one night, and in

the morning it was gone,—and my sailor lad, gone too.—

“But I never doubted him, ma’am,” she continued, “though sometimes I am weary watching for his coming; sometimes as I linger on the shore, and strain my eyes to scan some faint sight of a ship across the Bay, coming landward, down the golden track of evening’s sunset light, I am tired a bit, tired waiting, but I never doubt him.”

“How long ago was it, Annice?” I ventured to ask. She counted her fingers as she replied:

“The years they are seven,”—and yet she was watching still, this girl,—who never doubted,—watching the golden path across the sea, for the sailor lad who never came.

“No, I do not doubt him,” she softly repeated to herself; “something is wrong somewhere, but,—God is good.”

This was all the story Annice Lee told me,—and somehow, it served to bind her heart to mine.—Well, it was not strange, for we both, this peasant girl, a fisherman’s daughter, and

me, the lady of the Hall, a gallant colonel's widow, had suffered,—both loved,—both knew what a grave meant !—

It scarcely needed a word of persuasion to win Annice's consent to return with me to the Hall. "I am like Ruth," she said, in her humble, modest way, that took all of too great familiarity from the words, "like Ruth, whithersoever thou goest, I will go, where thou dwellest, I will dwell."

In reply, though she was maid, and I was mistress, I whispered, "God grant, Annice, your God may be my God,"—somehow, the way in which she had said "God is good," the faith of it, had taken such root in my heart.

Annice was with us that last evening down on the cliff, sitting a little apart, looking off on the sea, but when Eulalie asked that question of Mr. Ward, she turned and listened for his reply, and she too read the words he traced on the yellow sand,—and this was how she was able to give me the clue to their meaning. "I suppose, ma'am," she said, "Mr.

Ward was preaching one of those parable sermons, after the model of those the Saviour taught by the lilies of the field, and the chirping sparrows.—It is beautiful to think, every good gift we receive from the Lord, is a promise of another gift.—Every beautiful thing we behold a sort of hint-like, of a greater beauty *There*,” and Annice looked up,—“every pleasure, a sort of foretaste of the joy we shall know when, like the children of Israel, we have crossed over Jordan.”

“And I am thinking too,” she continued, “Mr. Ward had a double meaning, he looked so hard at Miss Eulalie as he spoke, as though he was thinking, that her, and the other young folks’ childhood and youthful days were God’s gift of promise to them, holding, according as their hearts and minds developed, prophecies of their future, while the happiness that comes to them is but a foretaste of deeper joy.”

How would my children be brought to a knowledge of this deeper joy, of which Annice spoke?

More than once I wondered, as I gazed on their bright young faces, and as I wondered, I prayed that they might keep "the good of childhood" with them, all through the years of their life.

Surely "the enthusiasm, the freshness of interest, the innocent simplicity, the spirit of hope, inquiry, and wonder, which characterize early years ought to endure late in life.—We ought to take the child-heart with us into old age,—and old age should be but the beautiful ripened fruit of the blossom of youth, taking up into its own settled fullness, much of what was holiest, and loveliest in childhood. We ought to grow by regaining, in a truer and more lasting form, the things that made our youth bright and happy."

But,——do we?—

"We must enter the kingdom of heaven on to the latest hour of life as little children." For,—Christ said, "Except ye become as little children ye shall in no wise enter in."

XVI.

EXTRACTS CONTINUED.

JUST as in nature, there are seasons of the year that are marked by storms, equinoctial rains, and equinoctial gales, during which the sunshine only breaks through the rifted clouds in brief quickly-fleeting beams, and just as these stormy times are wont to follow seasons of calm weather, so, close following that month by the sea-side, which had been so full of peace to us all, there came a turbulent, stormy time, casting its baleful shadow of misrule over my flock.

A time during which my authority seemed of scarce more weight than the breakwater below the cliff at Dartmouth, which seemed so powerless to hold in bay the waves, when winds were high,—and yet, though the spray

and the foam broke over that stay, never once, so Annice told me, had the waves really destroyed the barrier,—though they had beat hard against it,—hard.—

All the gloom which I had thought lifted, seemed to settle again over Francis' spirit; while as for Hugh, he threatened to break quite loose from all restraint, and Zita, who had been so brave and patient, suddenly became restive; even Eulalie, though her temper was always sweet as the fragrance of a flower, grew for a time dreamy, and indifferent to the simple pursuits that had formerly been her delight.

Maud and Herbert, too, caught the spirit of disaffection, and for the first time in their lives were rebellious and moody under reproof; even Yvo, and child Britta were restless,—for the spirit of the elder ones in a family is always such a pervasive influence over the younger.

What did it all mean? My mother-heart was sorely tried to find a cause for it. But not so Annice Lee, for when she met me one

day with tears in my eyes, she said, "Do not fear, ma'am, it will all come right; it is only that their young souls are beginning to take for themselves independent root,—only wait."

Two words, that were the motto of Annice Lee's patient, hopeful life.

So I waited,—but it was not a happy time, and yet on looking back, I can see now that Annice was right, and that it was the rooting time of independent action and thought to my older ones, who had come to the place where the mile-stones of childhood were left behind, where the golden mile-stone of youth pointed only onward. And the path, it was strange to their untried feet,—“the mysterious gate leading into the future's undiscovered land,” it opened wide,—but—where would it lead?—No wonder the young things were perplexed.

But I must not tarry over their transition time; enough, if it was somewhat dark and enwrappt in sombre shadows of reserve, petulance, and waywardness, according as their natures varied; yet, like as at last the chrysalis

breaks asunder the foldings of dull-hued mysterious fibres that enclose it, and comes forth golden tinted and rainbow colored, a thing with wings, so my children came out from the shadows, every one of them,—though some stayed in longer than others,—yet when at last the outing time dawned, the saint echoës I had striven to plant in their souls, lo! they had become saint-likenesses.

And if they had to be sorely tried first, tried by joy as well as sorrow, was it not worth it?—

It was strange; these sons and daughters of mine needed such different tests, as sorrow and joy.—Yet, why do I say strange, when every summer time nature repeats the same story in the language of flowers; some needing sunshine, and some shade!—Yes, as long as time lasts in the world's garden, there will always be evening primroses and morning-glories.

XVII.

JUST here I bridge a wide space in my mother's journal, only culling from it extracts here and there, that serve to reveal the events of chief importance in our histories,—and the space stretches over full ten years,—time enough to have launched us all on the wide open sea of life, even to little Britta, who stepped out of childhood during them.

EXTRACTS.

Through the kindness of cousin Reginald, arrangements were made which enabled Francis to enter Oxford six months sooner than we had anticipated.

My son's career as a student was brilliant; he quickly won a claim to scholarly honor from classmate and instructors alike, and when

his university career ended, he went forth, speeded by the good wishes and bright hopes of more than one veteran in learning.

Outwardly all promised fair in Francis' future.—But the inward unrest,—was it hushed? Had he hearkened to the heavenly Voice, saying: "Peace be still."—Was there calm in his soul?—

It was thus I asked him, as arm in arm we trod the long sweep of the avenue, the evening following his return home, when his university days were over.

As he replied, I needed to clasp close to my heart Annice Lee's two words, "only wait," for his answer showed that beliefs in which he had been trained had slipped away from him, and revealed too, that "he was so eager in his study of the newest schools of modern philosophy and thought, that faith not only in Christ, but even in God," had well-nigh disappeared from his soul.—My boy, my first-born son was in spiritual darkness.

During the summer months that followed

Francis' return, I had all my flock together again for a while, even to Hugh, our young soldier.

It was a summer of fair weather, marked by sunshiny days, the old dial on the lawn outdid itself in the counting of hours.

The happy old sun-dial that counted only pleasant hours!—Such a counselor it has been to me and mine.—Ah, if we could, like it, only count and remember the pleasant hours!—and yet,—why do I wish thus, when it is so often in the dark hours that we learn the fullest lessons of strength, even if they be the hardest. For,—I think it is in the darkness that we learn most truly that we are nothing,—Christ all.

But Eulalie, talking with me of this last evening, differs from me; she said it seemed to her the deepest lessons of our own weakness and Christ's strength, were something like the two extremes of midnight and midday.

The darker the night the more stars one beheld, just as the brighter the light, the wider one's outlook; thus, she thought joy and suc-

cess made one realize their utter dependence on a Higher strength than their own, just as fully as sorrow and disappointment made one cling to it.

Hugh joined us as we were talking of this spiritual strength, and he asked, "What I meant by the 'hardest lessons of strength'?"—

Indeed it was a difficult question to answer, comprising, as it does, that content of soul, that is not stoical acquiescence in the inevitable, that patience that can only be learned by struggle and self-discipline, the restraint of self.

I told my son, the essence of that self-mastery which I called the hardest lesson of strength, always seemed to me held in those words of Isaiah the prophet: "Their strength is to sit still,"—to be nothing of self,—all of Christ.

I think he caught my meaning; Hugh was always quick to respond to and understand what the others sometimes called mother's hidden answers.

Francis expects a friend to-night,—young

Lord Campbell; he is to be with us till September; Francis acting as his tutor on some abstruse subject which the young man is investigating,—and in a week we are to have another guest, for Grace Ward is coming for the midsummer holidays. Our friendship with the Wards is still as dear as when it was formed, though we meet but seldom. The last twelvemonth has been full of trials to them. Miss Anna's frail physical strength failed in the autumn, and Mr. Ward's work has pressed harder, while their means of support have not increased. There seemed no way but to consent to let Grace take the place of day-governess offered her by an early friend of Miss Anna's, who has a troop of rosy-faced children needing instruction. Grace has had good courage for the undertaking, but in the late spring, when I was in London with Zita, I saw the tired look that was beginning to steal the light out of her soft hazel eyes; I saw her smiles came just as often as they used, but that they faded almost as quickly as they came.

It was noting these little things that led me to win the promise of this summer-time visit.

Lord Campbell has come ; he arrived last night as we expected.

Why is it that I can not quite explain myself to myself?

Is a mother's heart wont to be such a contradictory thing? one minute pleased to have her children fair and beautiful, winning and worthy to win admiration, and the next half vexed, that they should be admired.

The young men walked over from the railway station. We were all out on the lawn as they approached. They came by the river path; thus we did not notice them till they were close to us, and it was Eulalie who espied them first.

Eulalie, who stood the central figure of our group ; she was robed in pure white, her hair drawn back from the broad open forehead, and her eyes, they shone like stars that night. One arm was lifted ; she was reaching up for a

late June rose that crowned the topmost branch of a high flowering plant.

“I want it,” she said, “before the dew falls on its tender leaves,”—and she smiled, this daughter of mine, who had so many thoughts that out-winged her words.

It was that minute the young men, Francis and Lord Campbell, joined us, that minute that I saw the quick flush mount to the stranger’s face, the light deepen in his eyes, then, that my mother-heart knew how fair my Eulalie was,—and that this stranger knew it too.

And,—my own young days,—they never seem far away from me, even though I am the mother of these tall sons and maidens, and somehow, an echo from them came floating down the years, and I knew too, as well as if a voice had told it, what the look in Arthur Campbell’s eyes meant.

Our second guest has been with us six weeks now; Grace Ward, who is as light of heart this holiday-time, as a bird let loose from imprisoning cage.

Everything is bright to her, sunshine and shadow alike; when she talks it is like hearkening to a bird sing, there is such a note of happiness in her tone; the smiles that were so fleeting in London are abiding now, for truly she seems to smile all the time.

I sat listening to her words this morning, as her little hands were busy twining into garlands for a parish festival, the flowers with which Yvo and Britta had filled her lap and heaped about her, as she sat on a low stool on the broad balcony.

She was talking to Hugh, who was reaching out to her, now one, and then another blossom, as the glance of her eye, the nod of her head indicated.

Francis was listening too, leaning against one of the balcony columns that was draped with clinging jasmine; and as he listened, idly pulling off and ruthlessly scattering on the green-sward the delicate white petals of the fragrant blossoms.

“Do you remember,” said Grace, “that first time we met, that summer by the sea? Do you remember?”

What was the instinct that made me, the mother, glance from one son to the other as the young girl repeated, "Do you remember?"

How blind I have been; why, in that second's glance I read the open secret that was stirring in my Francis' and Hugh's hearts,—and,—yet, all those weeks I had never thought of it.—But once read, how much it revealed to me; how my heart sank.—Were my sons, the boys who had slept in the same cradle, to be brought in conflict for the love of Grace Ward?

Was this the reason why, ever since those days by the sea, when I had thought them but lads, Francis and Hugh had seemed to drift apart from one another; was this the cause of the unspoken estrangement between them?

These were undefined queries, even while they were whispering in my mind, bringing back many events of the past, I heard every syllable Grace uttered.

Her words were like pictures, so glowing in

warmth and color, that they seemed caught from the radiance of last night's sunset, the glory of which had lingered in the west till long after the moon rose.

"Do you remember," again she repeated, "how the waters of the Bay sparkled in the light that day; how the blue waves broke on the yellow sands where the children were at play; how we found the shells that held the sea-songs, and the tiny flowers of the ocean, the bits of tangled grass and weed, rosy red and deep green, faint pink and rich brown; oh, do you remember?" and she laughed, this innocent maiden, with a heart as light as a bird's, as she held out her little hand for the flowers Hugh reached toward her.

And Hugh,—his face was always as bright as the sunshine, but at that moment the radiance of it I can never forget,—and the look so like his father's!—

I shut my eyes from the very intensity of memory, and my heart it flew back, far back; for a minute I forgot the years between,—and the grave.—I was young again,—young

as the maiden Grace, twining flowers; I stood again in the garden surrounding the old Chateau, in far-away France, and music seemed to fill the air,—and yet,—it was only a whispered word,—rose leaves blown from the laden bushes seemed to fall about me; rose leaves carpeting all my path, in a minute,

“Past and Present bound in one,
Did make a garland for my heart.”

And then Francis moved,—and I was back again,—a mother, with sons and daughters grown,—a widow,—the mistress of Glentwood Hall.

A minute later I left the young creatures, happy with their flowers and their memories. I linked my arm into Francis', and we walked together across the lawn to the old oak tree, beneath whose shade Zita was teaching a group of the parish-school children, a song for the afternoon festival.

Francis left me there, but I had time for a brief word before we parted.

“It is high festival day,” I said, “the mid-

summer festival,"—and though the look on Francis' face was hard and cold, I ventured to add, "'and all festivals are fraternal.'" That is what makes them so beautiful, I think,—that, and the truth, that "'a festival is not a festival, unless we are at peace with one another!'"

"Then there will be no festival for me, mother," muttered my poor Francis, jealous of his own brother.

Ah, the children! I used to think when I tucked them up in bed, and when their infant voices had softly repeated after mine the evening prayer, that my hands and heart were as full as a mother's could be.

But—the childhood-time,—it was nothing like this present.

Eulalie came to me last night with a new light in her eyes, a new song in her heart, my joy-led child.

She did not say a word, she only clasped my hand and nestled her head down on my shoulder; but Arthur Campbell had been be-

fore, I knew all about it ; I had given my consent.

At last, Zita has spoken; ever since she was a child I have known how her heart was set on a life of serving others; I have watched for years the patient submission with which she has been content to serve in the somewhat limited sphere of our village, when I have known how wide-reaching her sympathies and desires were.

Once when I told her this, she replied :

“The best I can do
For the great world, is the same best I can
For this my world.”

And I knew she was right ; I knew when the time for broader work came, God would call her, and now it has come.

These are dark, anxious days to us ; the cloud of war rising in the East is stealing the light from many and many an English home.

Days like those, when my husband fell, are brooding again over our land, and though the wide sea rolls between us and the battle-field

and the cannon's roar, the carnage is in the women's hearts at home, I think.

But Zita, what did she ask?

Yes, I knew it would come,—she too will sail away to the land where Hugh is, and where my Yvo is to begin his active life as surgeon of a newly-formed regiment.

She will go, like a Sister of Charity, to bind up wounds, to soothe dying men, to whisper of home here, and *there*; to treasure and send back last messages of remembrance and peace to stricken hearts.

Not one of these olive branches of hope and comfort will my Zita let fall by the way; like Noah's dove she will waft them safely across the floods of great waters,—waters of sorrow.

She has gone,—she only waited long enough to kiss our Eulalie on her wedding-day.

The old Hall begins to seem deserted,—my nest is emptying fast,—only Francis, Maud, and Britta with me now; and it was full six months after Zita left before Francis came home.

It was only a passing trouble, he said, that brought him, only that he needed rest for a time ; a mere mist that seemed to gather before his eyes, like the fleecy clouds of a summer's day ; rest would cure him.

Life had continued brilliant to Francis as far as literary success could make it. The kings of criticism in well-nigh every walk of scholarship had held out the golden sceptre to my son.

The unrest of his soul, the bitter wrench of envy, that knew Grace to choose Hugh rather than himself, had only served to stimulate him into action,—sorrow and disappointment never did paralyze one of my children.

But what of that mist before his eyes?

The London surgeons, the specialists most famed for knowledge in the working of that wonder in the face of man,—the eye,—were baffled by it ; they shook their heads gravely,—rest was all they prescribed. But the mist meanwhile increased ; could it be that my Francis, whose eyes had held such a far-reaching look of yearning after higher things ever

since the days of his babyhood, was to be stricken now in the zenith of his manhood with blindness?

What would we do if we knew when life began, all it was to hold for our loved ones. How could we bear the knowledge?

In our parish church, yesterday, the old church that is like three buildings in one, first the tower, then the nave, and then the chancel, always reminding me of the Trinity,—the holy Three in One.—

This mystical number three, how it runs like parallel lines through so much of our knowledge and understanding of many things, mind, heart, and soul,—childhood, youth, and maturity, — bud, flower, and fruit, — faith, hope, and love.— How almost endless are these trios, that like music are set to the harmony of the same three-fold note.—

In our church, I repeat, there was a holy service; my Herbert received his charge, his commission to go forth a consecrated minister of the Lord. And his young heart did not

faint, though the task was mighty he undertook; his voice did not falter as he made the sacred vows.—And then, filling the church like heavenly music, sounded the soft, low notes of the organ, and tender and sweet as though it were an angel's whisper, Maud's voice, singing the Amen to Herbert's consecration, the verily "so be it."

"A sacred burden is the life ye bear,
Look on it, lift it, bear it solemnly,
Stand up and walk beneath it steadfastly,
Fail not for sorrow, falter not for sin,
But onward, upward, till the goal you win.
God guard you, and God guide you on your way,
Young pilgrim warrior, who sets forth to-day."

I would fain have had Herbert's work begin in some peaceful rural parish of our own county; but the Master called him elsewhere, and it is a crowded, bustling manufacturing town where he is located.

Parting Herbert and Maud, was like parting a sunbeam, the two had always been so closely associated.

Nevertheless, just as when sunbeams are

parted, they go on shining, so my Herbert and Maud possessed each a light of their own individuality, that did not grow dim, because no longer they could be together in the sweet companionship of frequent intercourse.

A light, that in my Maud's youth was of such tender loveliness, so mild in its radiance ; no wonder that no sooner were her charms known, than there came a claimant who picked this fair flower from my garden.

Maud's is a brief story of wedded happiness and love ; the flowers that bloomed on her bridal day had scarcely begun to droop, the white lilies and Provence roses were still blossoming, the June birds still singing when she came back to me with the light of earthly joy gone out of her life,—a widow.—

I have had great anxiety about Hugh. I knew from his letters that for a time a change had crept over the spirit of my frank, true-hearted son,—and now he is at home with me again, and has told me about it, and my heart is at rest.

His furlough is but brief; in the autumn he must leave us again; it was only granted that his wounded arm might have time to fully regain its strength; there is nothing of an invalid in his appearance; on the contrary, he looks strong as a young oak, and brave as a young warrior.

To-morrow, Grace Ward is coming, and before he leaves us, Hugh's wish is that they may be married.

But what was the story he told me, and why, now that I know it is my heart at rest?

"I wearied, mother," he said, "of the life of restraint I led; I craved merry revelling and companionship with others of my age, their lives seemed to me 'one full strain of mirth and song and glee,'—and I yielded. I went to their banquets, I drank of the 'red wine that sparkled in the cup,'—and when once I yielded, the madness of that time well-nigh blotted out the thought of home, of you, mother, — and Grace, — and then, — there came,"——

But Hugh did not tell me what that *then*

held,—he only bowed his head on my shoulder and wept, though he was so strong in his young manhood, as if he had been a boy again.

“After that,” he presently continued, “the spell was broken, and now,—like my father,—I am trying to be not only a soldier for my country’s honor, but a soldier of the Cross, but I fail so.”—

Do you wonder, after hearing my boy’s tale, that my mother-heart was at rest?

For,—“is not the true perfection of a man the finding out his own imperfections,”—and did not those words, “I fail so,” show me that my Hugh was on the high-road to that “highest perfection any one can attain in this life, the being ever increasingly sensible of how weak and imperfect he is?”

Grace came as we expected, and when she and Hugh parted a month later, they were husband and wife.—He left her in my charge; his gentle flower, he called her. I must guard her from all sorrow, he said.

I can see him now ; that parting morning ; tall and brave, nobler in his bearing than any of my sons,—yes, I seem to hear even now the clank of the sword by his side ; I can see the glitter of the gold embroidery of his uniform as he crossed the room, and laid his hand on Francis' shoulder, saying in a voice tremulous with feeling : “ You will be a brother to her, Francis.”

And Francis,—he answered, “ Yes.”

Which of my two sons was the truest hero then ? The brave soldier-lad, crowned with honor for valiant service done in defence of his country ? or the pale man, with figure bowed for one so young, with eyes clouded to the light of this world's beauty ?—Which was the greatest hero ?

The Bible says, “ he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city.”—

Do you wonder I caught that hour, an echo, faint and low, like a chime of pealing bells ringing in some distant church-tower, a note of the *self*-mastery, that was beginning to ring

in my Francis' soul,—and, *self*-mastery is the key-note to saint-likeness.—Do you wonder I was glad?

The old Hall would be a dreary place now save for Britta, my happy-hearted maiden, who could no more help being glad than the sun can help shining.

Truly it seems as though some prophetic guiding led me, when I chose to call this my last-born child after the old Irish ancestor and saint.—Britta,—our shining light, yes, she was well named.

Can it be she too, my youngest one, is going to spread her wings and fly away,—oh, my birdlings! my birdlings!—

She has gone, our Britta, gone to sing and to smile, to comfort and to cheer other hearts than ours,—and again the number of my nestlings is lessened; only two now, Francis and Maud, with me.

For Grace, and the sturdy little lad named for Francis, have sailed away over the blue

sea, the young wife loves so well,—sailed away, that the soldier-father may kiss his baby son.

Zita and Yvo, how they also will welcome them.

XVIII.

I WONDER, kind eyes and gentle hearts, that read this simple story of a family, can you make sense of these clustered extracts from a mother's journal?

Can you thread a daisy chain, like the children do with the flowers, of these fragments that strew the pages just turned?—

As the children thread the daisies that peep out like smiles from every hedge-row and lane, they say, those happy English lads and lassies, "Look the flowers, they have an eye," and so they call them, Day's-eye, and they tell how the sun kissed those golden centers, till lo! they became golden hearts, in the wee, crimson-tipped things.

Like the English children, will you say, oh, kind readers: "Lo! these extracts, simple though they be, naught more than glimpses

of home and family life, yet have eyes of meaning, hearts of love."

Will you have patience to go on, and read more in detail my mother's tracing of the saint-like echoes life and its experience brought out and revealed in her children's histories, as the wind brings out music from the chords of a wind-swept harp, — echoes it needed the wind of life, and the years to stir. —I find a budget of these memories still waiting to be untied; shall we turn their pages and read them together?—

PART SECOND.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

"Great indeed is their reward, for it is no less than the very beatific vision to contemplate and adore. That supreme moral beauty, of which all earthly beauty, all nature, all art, all poetry, all music, are but phantoms and parables, hints and hopes, dim reflected rays of the clear light of that everlasting day, of which it is written—that 'the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.'"

KINGSLEY.

I.

EXTRACTS FROM MY MOTHER'S REMINISCENCES.

IT is a different thing to pen the stories of men and women,—as my sons and daughters are now,—than it was to write of them, while they were haloed by youth, even if it were late-lingering youth to the older ones.

And yet, it is an easier task for a mother to undertake than it would be for any one else; for a mother's understanding and deciphering of much that seems unintelligible in her children's hearts and characters, is something like an "electric battery answering to electric battery, with a constant interchange of bright and thrilling currents."

And I feel prompted to continue these records, at least so far as the clearly bringing out in them what I call the decisive chapters

in my children's lives,—the hours which set seal to their claim to saint-hood, which caught up the echo of it that had sounded at intervals on from childhood to youth, and that now in maturity rings out a clear peal of victory won,—victory over *self*.

As I use the word saint, and apply it to my group, I feel there may be many good men and women who would shrink back from its use.—And I would distinctly state, and have it understood, even though the bells of victory have rung loud and clear in my children's lives, they are men and women still.

Men and women who will go on stumbling, striving, oftentimes failing as they tread the pilgrim's upward path, till the gate at last opens, and they pass within,—within, to join the great company of the “holy ones of God. The heroes and heroines, who kept themselves unspotted from the world, they who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, which is the spirit of *self-sacrifice*.”

But why do I use the words decisive chap-

ters? Because, while I firmly believe every event in our lives is a thread in the seamless robe, every day a part of the full rounded years it takes to complete them, I also believe, to all of us there come hours, in which we make decisions that stay with us, an abiding presence, a controlling influence, all through the after years of earthly life, and on through the years that are numbered, a thousand of them but as one day,—on into the great unending Hereafter.—I believe too, it is not always with some great sorrow or temptation that these test-hours come. I believe sometimes it is no more than the acceptance of some humble daily burden, or the resistance of a temptation that is so subtle, so undefined, we scarcely grasp its full meaning, and yet by that inward law of right and wrong, that God plants in the heart of every man and woman, we know it must be crushed out, just as we know the tiny spark that falls almost unheeded amid the dry leaves, or drought-parched grass of a forest must be crushed out, because though it is no more

than a spark, it holds the heart of a flame that can lay low the goodly trees, and burn and scorch every green twig that crowns their topmost branches.

And it is the record of such test-hours that came to my sons and daughters, as they come to us all, that I want to catch and hold.

Though he numbered in age among the last half of my eight, it is of Herbert's conflict-hour I will tell first.

But before I detail how the conflict of self-mastery, for the sake of a Higher than self, was waged in my gentle son's soul, I want to turn back to the old fancy of my youthful years.

Those years which brought my children to me.

The special fancy I refer to, was the giving of names previously borne by saints of old, and the choosing of gems,—that I wanted to be amulets of meaning,—according to the months that were joy-marked by the coming of these precious gifts,—my children!

Yet, their names, and the gems, were to me

something like the upper waves of the sea, while deep down in my heart, like the calm waters that flow below the visible, there were flowing deeper channels and desires for my children; and while I chose their names, their gems, in my heart I chose, too, for each child a verse from the benediction verses of that sacred garland of Blessings, in which is revealed the "conditions of life and character, which make it possible for the Lord to give to men the happiness He would give to all."

Strangely enough, though I had been reared in a creed environed with saints' days, never till the very last observance of "All Saints" in our parish church, did I realize the full significance of my choosing verses from the beatitudes for my children.

And yet how could it have escaped me, when they are the Gospel portion set apart for that day, and as we read them, we know the great multitude whom we contemplate, the innumerable company of angels, the spirits of just men made perfect, when on earth be-

longed to the army whom no man can number,
the Blessed.

Well may we

“Yield them reverence, yea, bless the ages
By their great deeds and sufferings sanctified.”

But we may remember too, that,

“Still other names, on God’s resplendent pages,
By theirs are fit to be inscribed beside.”

And here, just here, I find justification for
calling my sons and daughters saints, for, tell
me, is it not true that here on earth

“Saints are with us in the lowly places
Of toil, and tears, and poverty, and sin?”

“They move in common ways, unpraised, unheeded,
Accepting work that nearest to them lies;
Zealous to serve where most their help is needed,
Unconscious angels in an earthly guise.

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The tasks of love they patiently fulfill,
Nursing the weak, and comforting the weary—

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Naught matters if their duty well is done,
Living each day as pilgrims and as strangers,

They are content if God's applause is won.

.
. . . Self-subdued.—

“O ye holy ones, ye make our households dearer;
Ye consecrate our hearths,—
Ye bring the unveiled world of glory nearer,
And Christ to doubting, troubled spirits show.”

II.

MORE EXTRACTS.

AND now, on to my Herbert and his trial-test.

It was to fill a curacy in a manufacturing town that he left us, the resident incumbent of which was an old man; thus the care and responsibility of parish work was much intrusted to Herbert.

The night before he went from home I gave him,—as I had each of my children when they went out from me to meet the world as independent men and women,—a tiny golden cross, on which was engraved the “blessed verse” my heart had chosen for him in his infancy.

It is strange the fitness with which in Herbert's case, and in fact in the lives of all my children, these chosen benediction verses seem specially applicable to their needs.

Herbert's is,—“Blessed are the poor in spirit,” and how he has needed to pray to be kept humble and lowly in heart, there has been so much in his life to engender high thoughts of self. As he read the words, repeating them aloud, he smiled and asked :

“Tell me, mother, why you chose them for me; tell me who are the poor in spirit?”

Well enough he knew, this son of mine, who, young as he was then, was deeply versed in the meaning of the holy Gospel.

Yet I could not say nay, when again he asked, so I answered :

“The poor in spirit, Herbert, are they, I think, who know and feel their own utter poverty, their entire dependence upon their Lord, their nothingness without Him. They who know ‘if there be any good in their lives, it did not originate in themselves, but is a gift from God’; and thus their consciousness of imparting holy thoughts, precious counsel to others, or of active usefulness in the Master’s service, wakens in them no self-love or self-admiration, but ‘it causes in their minds an

ever wakeful certainty of the goodness and the presence of God, and in their hearts a foretaste of the happiness and blessedness of heaven.' ”

This was the substance of my talk with Herbert. Full seven years he remained with his first charge,—seven years marked by much of perplexity and hard work, but with much of blessedness too, for many a rough man, many a hard heart, many a weak and sorrowful woman, led by Herbert's teachings, heard the voice of the Shepherd speaking to their souls, bidding them come to Him for rest,—and he had led them into the green pastures, and beside the still waters of trust in Christ.

It had been a humble post of service, according to this world's estimate of position ; and according to that estimate, as those seven years ended, a future bright as the landscape when the sun breaks through the rifted clouds of a gray, leaden sky, seemed to dawn upon my son.

For at that time one of the most important beneficiaries in Devonshire came into

Arthur Campbell's gift again, and he straightway offered it to Herbert.

We all urged his acceptance, and scarcely had two months flitted away before he was settled in the old Rectory that was within an hour's drive of Campbell Castle, Eulalie's home.

Maud went to him for the settling, and on her return the description she gave Francis and myself of Herbert's surroundings were like a series of bright pictures. I know the region well, having so often visited Eulalie; and as I listened to Maud, memory gave reality to her words, as she told of her arrival, and of how Herbert had met her on the bridge of Shaugh, which derives its name from Shaugh church-tower, and how they had there sent the carriage on, while they walked the remaining distance to the old Rectory nestled among the trees, and how like a great wall of protection, just beyond the bridge,—a modern erection of hewn granite that separated the "sister waters" that rush tumultuously beneath it,—uprose an almost perpendicular hill

that terminated in a rugged peak, which caught the first beams of the rising sun, and the last rays of its setting.

And then Maud had gone on to tell of the applause and favor Herbert's eloquent words had won from the many titled families who frequented that parish church, and of the goodwill with which the humbler folk regarded him,—and she had smiled a tender smile that held a hint of another joy dawning for my son.

The letters that came to us from Herbert for weeks after were as bright as the colors of autumn flowers. We read them aloud. They never contained aught that was meant for my mother-eye alone. They were pleasant diary-like letters, that took us into the heart of Herbert's parish work; we came to know and speak of more than one of his parishioners as though they were friends of our own; we shared the little trials that now and then sprang up in his path; we joyed in his joys, and we were proud and happy when we heard of some sermon more than usually well written and well received.

Maud was wont to say, it seemed to her as though Herbert was like a gardener who tended the royal rose, the stately lily, the rare blooms of tropical clime, yet tended, too, the lowly growing plants, for the people of his charge were so divided into two classes, the rich and the poor, the high-born and the lowly.

Summer had gone, autumn was waning before I visited Herbert in his new home. I went alone; Francis seldom left the Hall, and Maud remained with him. It was nearing twilight when we reached the Rectory; driving across the bridge, the shadows from Shaugh Hill fell heavy and dark across our way, and the eddies and rapids of the swiftly-flowing water that rushed so wildly beneath the arches, looked leaden and gloomy. It was a desolate evening; rain had begun to fall an hour before; the wind blew stormy from the east, shaking ruthlessly from tree bough and bushy branch, the yellow leaves, that had been ready for a week past to fall, at the first rough breath.

As we passed through the Rectory gate, and the lights from the windows, where the curtains were drawn back, flashed out, it was a weird scene they lit up, sombre and mournful.

But when once I had stepped across the threshold of the old house, all was cheer and brightness.

I can hardly describe the sense of comfort, that like the warm, cordial grasp of a friendly hand, seemed to greet one on entering this Rectory home.

It was an old house, a perfect type of what we are wont to call English comfort, and yet, when I try to cage into tangible description, wherein this pleasantness consisted, I am at a loss. In truth, I think it came from that undefined sense that pervaded every nook and corner of it with a certain peacefulness, as though could the mute walls tell the life-stories they had enclosed during the many, many years since first the Rectory was called home, their tales would all have been of quiet family histories,—histories in which, perhaps, many a

time hearts had beat fast with sorrow, as well as throbbed and pulsed with joy, yet they had ever been brooded over, and sheltered by that abiding Presence, the recognized Peace, that holds sway in a home where Love is the foundation-stone.

Herbert had much to tell me; we talked long and late. He had a picture to show me, too, and after looking at it I seemed to bridge the winter months that must elapse before that sweet, calm face would greet my Herbert's coming in and going out, with the smile of a young wife's welcome.

It was not a beautiful face that he showed me, and yet I loved to gaze on the dear brown eyes that looked from it, with such trust and peace in their depths,—and the half smile that played around the rested curve of the lips, had something almost holy in it, as if it came from thoughts that were far-reaching, and tender, and true.

That being true in one's thoughts as well as words, so gives the angel-look to a face, I think.

“This is Mary Gordon,” Herbert said, adding, “Do you think her home will seem pleasant to her, mother?”

And he stirred the coals slumbering in the grate, till they flashed out a hundred sparks, and flame-jets, that lit up into radiance every corner of the room,—and then we talked again of his future, and as we talked our hearts drew close together.

The love of a good, true, noble-souled man like my Herbert, for this woman of his choice, was such a sacred thing, I could not keep the grateful tears back, as reverently he told me of it.

Weeks followed that night, all in memory beautiful to me as the beautiful dreams of childhood.

My Herbert was loved so well by the parish folk, and Eulalie and Arthur had such pleasant words to tell of the good he was doing, not only in the cottage homes, but among the dwellers in the stately mansions that lifted turreted walls and gabled roofs, from many a park enclosure all that country-side over.

Often I talked with him of that verse, "the poor in spirit," for he needed to keep it ever in mind, surrounded as he was by temptation to self-congratulation and approbation,—more than once I said to myself, it is through this love and approval, which is scattered in my son's path, as thickly as roses on the pathway of a happy bride, that his trial test will come.

Yes, I said to myself, before he knows, the seeds of *self* as chief, will up-spring in his soul, and, weak of faith that I was, I watched tremblingly for the first breath of some strong wind, some cloudy hour, in which the lamp of humility in his heart would burn low.

But it was not thus the trial came. No, the stillness and the repose of the meek was not disturbed in Herbert's heart, no cloud came between that and God to shut away the falling of heavenly dew that refreshed the tender plant of humility.

Have you ever thought of this deep meaning of the dew, that links it with the meek in heart; ever thought as you gazed on some fair blossom, or wide-spread grassy plain of

far-reaching meadow all impearled in the morning dew, how the grass-blades and the flowers are well-nigh hidden by the noiseless jewels that silently, as a blessing, fall in the peaceful night, and are thankful to be hidden by these God-sent dew-drops, just as the lowly of soul are thankful to be cast out of sight for the sake of the Master's honor, just as when His refreshment falls on their souls, they shine with all the brighter glow for His glory's sake.

It was nearing Yule-time when I parted from Herbert. I left him on a December morning that was all unlike the November evening of my arrival, for the air was clear as the blue of a cloudless winter's day could make it. The rushing waters below the bridge were sparkling, and as full of play as they had been of storm, when first I beheld them. Shaugh's great Hill was capped with a crown of snow on its topmost peak; the hedge of Holly that had looked so dark and gloomy as we drove up the carriage-way on the night of my arrival, was glossy and shining in its deep

mid-winter green, and scarlet tipped with the Christmas-tide berries.

The day appointed for Herbert's marriage was a spring morning in early May, and before the month had waned, he and his gentle bride were at home in the old Rectory.

Meanwhile, I watched the increasing approval that crowned his work with many an anxious foreboding, but he continued humble-minded as a child. The attentions he received never seemed to rouse the least consciousness in him that he had out-stepped others of his age; self seemed all forgotten as he went about his duties; it was a time of great peace and joy all through those summer days.

And then, as suddenly as the change from his first parish to the idyl-like life of his second charge, came another call to my son,—and he was brought face to face with a decision, the making of which, tried as it had never been tried before, the reality of his consecration to the cause of the Master he served.

A decision which admitted of no delay; the hour that brought it must hold its answer.

Mary told me of that morning's experience, even to the least detail, and the memory of it has stayed in my mind ever since, like a picture.

It was the last of the summer days, a sweet tranquil morning, so still in the Rectory garden, there seemed no sound save the humming of the bees; all things else, even to the birds, were mute.

As she and Herbert passed out of the garden and looked up to Shaugh Hill, the rugged, craggy peak was silver-crested, in the softened yellow glow that rested like a gossamer veil before the deep blue of the sky, against which the outline of the hill was sharply defined.

The waters of the river went dancing on their way, murmuring a low song, that they did not hear till they stood on the bridge.

They were standing there when still a far-off sound, they heard the post-boy's horn; they waited for his approach, there, in the

sweet morning, with the great hill looking down on them, and the waters below chanting their melody.

There were many missives in the post-boy's saddle-bags that day; the Rectory pouch was full. Mary reached up her little hands to receive it, and Herbert exchanged a word of greeting and good-will with the lad before he started on his way.

And their trial had come!—but they did not know it,—even though Mary held the letter that was to lay like some tangible thing this decision at my Herbert's feet.

In their happy ignorance they lingered on the bridge, full five minutes, looking down at the waves, and off up the winding road by which the post-boy had gone laden with the white-winged, sorrow and joy-full missives that every post-boy carries.

No wonder that those lads who go about day by day in this service of carrying messages from heart to heart, come to have a look of kindness on their faces, a note of sympathy in their voices, as though in a certain way

they felt a personal interest in every one of the many letters they carry in that strange meeting-place of widely differing sentiments—a mail-bag.

How they are crowded in side by side; messages of love, words of bitterness, tidings of grief, tidings of joy, heralders of smiles, heralders of tears, side by side, like flowers and weeds, sunshine and shadow, night and day.

A letter from Yvo, Herbert said, as twenty minutes later he turned the key in the pouch and emptied its contents on his study table, and his voice rang glad and clear; news from this absent brother was always so welcome.

Without delay the seal was broken; Yvo's writing was firm and bold, easy to read, and it covered but half a page.

“DEAR HERBERT:

“The work presses sorely; the men are dying by scores; can you come to our help? come and tell these poor fellows the ‘good news from Heaven to the worst of sinners.’

If you come, it must be without delay. The Bishop of Calcutta writes by this mail to submit your name as successor to ———, so all Diocesan arrangements will be made if your consent is won.”——

Herbert never spoke as he read the words, he only put his arm around Mary's slender form and drew her close to him.

And there,—in the silence,—alone with his God,—and his wife, my Herbert stood at last confronted with the supreme hour of his life,——the hour which laid “the axe at the root of the tree” of entire consecration to Christ's service,—and,—my son's faith bore the test,—though the struggle was hard.

“We will go, Mary,” he said presently, “some one else can fill our place here, but not many can go there and enter right in to the inner circle of the work as I can; with Yvo and Zita understanding the very needs of those brave, battle-wounded, fever-stricken soldier-lads,—yes, we will go.”

And then for a brief time the dear picture of home-happiness, earthly good, his life of

peaceful, earnest usefulness, and calm content came like a full-tided wave flooding his heart and mind with the sense of all his present held,—and the young wife, this gently, delicately reared woman ; had he a right to take her from home and friends, had he a right for her sake to sacrifice the comforts and happy interests that clustered around their present garden of labor, and to go forth to toil in the dreary field of work offered him in Yvo's brief call,—“ Come and help us,” and by a letter—that at first had been overlooked—from the Bishop, saying if it was his will to go,—the way was open.

It was Mary,—this Herbert told me—who saw the look of indecision that suddenly flashed up into his eyes,—Mary, who was silent, as he went through the great struggle in which *self* was conquered.

Mary, the young wife, who nestled closer to his side, who laid her little hand in gentlest touch against his flushed cheek ; she, who later on whispered, “ Christ said :

“ ‘ Sell thy goods,

Give to the poor, and taking up thy cross

Follow thou Me, and thou be sure shalt have
Treasure in heaven.' ”

After that, all questioning was at an end.

Two weeks later, a little company of men and women, with tears in their eyes, but deep peace in their hearts, stood on the pier at Blackwall.

And as we stood there, like a ray of light out from the shadow of the huge, well-armed vessel at anchor in the offing, a tiny boat darted across the silvery path of the waves,—and then,—more tears,—more prayers in the hearts,—and the little boat sped again across the sunlit water on into the shadow of the vessel.

Half an hour later, loud were the cheers that greeted the upheaving of that vessel's anchor; and then slowly, but surely, it dropped down the river.

Smaller and smaller grew the two figures, my Herbert and his Mary, as Maud and I watched them through our blinding tears, till at last we could descry them no more,—they had gone.

My Herbert had met and stood the test. "He had had a brave victory over his enemy,"——self,——"let Him grant that dwelleth above, that we fare no worse when we come to be tried than he."

III.

I AM half tempted to omit the pages which follow close on to my mother's detailed account of how dear Herbert by his full surrender of *self*-pleasing, when God's service demanded *self*-sacrifice, caught up the echo, and repeated in modern life the spirit of the ancient life of the Saint Herbert, for whom he was named.

That early Herbert, of whom the record tells, "his fervor was extraordinary, enabling him by the grace of God, to overcome evil with good; the man who lived in such nearness to the petition of the 'Our Father prayer,' that his every deed was pervaded with a sense of the heavenly Father-hood that made all with whom he came in contact his brothers and sisters."

Yes, I am tempted to omit the following

(189)

pages, for they must take me back to that darkest time of my life, the months closely following my young husband's death.

Yes, darkest, for though my heart has never ceased to ache with loneliness, I learned long ago that there are degrees in sorrow, just as there are varying shades in darkness.

I think I have learned, too,—only my weak heart so often fails and disappoints me when I think I have attained an abiding knowledge of some precious truth,—that this is because, as in the sky, so in the firmament of God's consolation and truth, there are stars that only shine in midnight gloom,—others that belong to the early eventide, when the darkness is nothing more than twilight dimness, and still others that shine only when night is nearing dawn.

Be this as it may, let but the soul when it beholds the stars of Holy Comfort say, as Jacob said,—“This is God's host”—and there will be a light in the heart that never goes out.

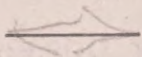
Do you remember? how Jacob called the

name of that place Mahanaim, the "double camp," for there the angels of God met him.

I said I would fain not copy the following pages,—and yet, would I want to leave myself and the record of myself out of my mother's memories?

And it is sweet to me that this account penned by mother when I was in my womanhood, comes so close to her words of Herbert, we have ever been so much to one another, and now his great love for Mary his wife, only seems to add to his tenderness for me.

But I am not to fill my paper with my own words, but with my mother's, so I turn again to her journal.



My Maud, how unlike the faith-test that has come to try the trust of her heart, is to the discipline life has brought to my other daughters.

No great masterful work like Zita's, no discipline of continued joy and prosperity like Eulalie, no sunny, love-bounded, flower-strewn path like Britta,—but a glimpse of the highest

earthly happiness, brief as the hour of dawn, —and then years of quiet, patient doing of the simple duties of home-life, cheering her mother's heart, being eyes for Francis, rendering tender ministries to the parish folk, as their needs require, and year after year repeating these same simple duties,——this is the record of Maud's outward life, since she came back to me a widow.

And yet, spite the monotonous routine of these years, her spirit is as fresh as the spirit of any of her sisters, seeming something like the brook in the meadow, that keeps fresh and green the grassy banks between which its waters flow, like a silver thread.

Yes, Maud seems possessed of a perpetual fountain of spiritual freshness, that makes all her duties, humble though they be, sweet "as brooks in the way."

And of humble duties, there is never any lack in this world of ours, to the heart that is willing to seek them, the hand willing to undertake them.

Thus my Maud, though her life holds none

of the strong, bright colors of active service, brilliant deeds, generous charity, which marks the outward lives of her sisters, is no less an artist than they are, for is she not working out a fair life-picture? and the "highest of all art is the art of living well,—the beauty of leaving in the place that knows one the record of a well-spent life,"—hence we can all be artists!—however humble our sphere.

Have I told—when I chose Herbert's verse in his infancy, I chose for Maud the one next it,—“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

And as I chose it, I remember my heart shrank back from the word mourn,—I did not want sorrow to touch my child, even if comfort were to follow,—and her dear, earnest little baby face told me that the comforting to her would never be forgetting; even though in these lives of ours, we are so like travelers, now in the valley, now on the hill-top.

And then I remember I thought of the deeper meaning of that word mourn, which pointed to spiritual mourning, for errors,

doubts, sin, and darkness, and opened out into the blessed comfort promised to those "who mourn for these things, not for their external consequences, but for their soul's sake."

After thinking thus, I was glad I chose the verse for Maud, as I have been ever since. And now I would fain lay my hand on the hour which held the key-note to Maud's present life of tender blessedness,—and I date it back to such a simple thing.

It was not long after she came home to me, her heart was very sad, the brightness gone out of it, for Maud had loved her young husband with the intensity of a quiet, reserved nature, that when once it opens the doors of its heart, opens them so wide.

The courtship of these two young things had been to me even more of a poem than Eulalie's and Hugh's, or than later on Britta's was.

Philip Murray was an orphan; he had led a lonely life; he was not one to easily make friends, and this fact bound him and Herbert

closer together, from the days at Oxford, where their friendship was formed.

It was there at Oxford that Maud first met Philip, but I will not trace the steps of their love-story, enough, there seemed no obstacle to their wedding young, and I let my Maud go forth on her marriage day with no anxious thought in my heart; I could trust her to Philip.

Their wedding trip was to the Continent. Annice accompanied Maud as temporary maid for the month they were to be absent; thus she was with Maud at that time of bewildering, sudden grief, for Philip was only alarmingly ill a brief twenty-four hours; it was a sudden cold and congestion; its cause they could trace to no exposure.

Twenty-four hours, and she numbered them as they passed, my poor child,—for the physician, a kindly man, told her the flame of life would burn no longer,—and yet she watched Philip with hope all through those hours; she was too young to despond at the first sorrow,—but Annice knew.

But as I said I would not trace the growth of Maud and Philip's love during their sunshine time, neither will I trace the record of those sad, sad days,—their midnight time,—after which Maud came back to me. From the first she was gentle and calm,—too calm,—and I knew though she had been tried as the gold is tried by fire, yet there must come to her an experience in which she must stoop and take up *voluntarily* the patient bearing of the cross of life, which now she submitted to,—like so many another sorrower,—because she could not help it,—and as I said before, this test-hour came in such a simple way.

We sat together out on the lawn on the rustic seat, beneath the shadow of the oak; it was a quiet hour, as quiet as the duties that had filled our day, and that had filled the days of many a week and month by-gone with the little things that were such trifles in the doing.

Well I recollect that that special day had held for Maud, nothing more than the gathering of a handful of fresh flowers which she

gave a weary, tired-faced woman, who came to the Hall on some humble errand, the reading column after column from the *Times* and *Gazette* to Francis, the teaching for an hour the clumsy fingers of the little maids in the parish school, to conquer the intricacies of hem and over-hand stitch, the writing of a letter or two; these were all, except the rendering of the slight services which she was ever watchful to render to me, her mother,—and she was tired; it all seemed but little worth,—she was lonely,—her heart ached,—she wearied for the touch of the hand so cold, but once so caressing; she wanted, poor child, to lay her head down on her young husband's shoulder, and cry her sorrow out,—she wanted to hear his voice, even if only one whisper of it.

I knew how she felt,—for I, too, had felt this longing for a touch, and a tone that would hush the fever of sorrow throbbing and throbbing in my heart,—soothe like some balm of sweet healing, the weary, weary, endless heart-ache.

And,—for she was not always patient those days, my gentle Maud,—neither is she now, after long years of discipline, her eyes can flash still, roses mount into her pale cheeks, and her quiet voice utter words not always well chosen; and so it will be till the end,—and I do not regret this, for it is the very struggle to attain patience, that makes the strength of self-mastery that sounds the saint-like echo in my Maud's life,—as in the lives of my other daughters and sons.

I find myself lingering so in these latter records, it is well I draw near their conclusion, for like the old woman that I am, I grow prosy with my wandering into the paths of thought, that open out to me from every sentence that holds a memory of my children's lives and conflicts.

Now resolutely I return to Maud.

“It all seems so useless,” she said to me; “my time filled with the doing of nothing really worth accomplishing; nothing but paltry duties,—my life is spoiled,—all the beauty and joy crushed out of it.—I am so tired.”

And she bowed her head, while her slight frame quivered and trembled with the blind passion of rebellion and pain.

I let her grief have its sway,—I let her tears fall.—I have great faith in tears,—Jesus wept.

When I spoke at last, I went back to her first words, of the uselessness of it all, and I only said :

“In all God sends to you there is a meaning, Maud ; no duty, however humble and insignificant, but He can make it a means of grace ; the little things, if done in the service of Christ, may become great things,” and softly I repeated words Herbert loved :

“Consecrate each petty care,
Make angels’ ladders, out of clouds.

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We whose law is love, serve less
By what we do, than what we *are*.”

And then I left Maud ; there are so many times in life, I think, when we need to be alone,—there are so many battles that must be fought by ourselves !

I left her to meet the truth, that though her heart be sore and lonely, still the duties of every-day life must be taken up.

When next we met, I knew my daughter had grasped the truth; knew it from the light in her eyes, the first beaming of the coming back of the freshness of heart that is now so abiding with Maud, for in that hour she had stretched out her empty hands in a wild yearning to have them filled again; she had prostrated her empty heart with an eager cry for comfort, comfort,—and even as thus she cried, something better than she asked had come, for Maud was a child of prayers and prayer, and in with her tears and pleadings she had murmured, “Thy will be done.”

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.”—The promise began to come true to my Maud from that hour.

Only just at first she could not realize it any more than the soldier fighting in the heat and amid the roar of battle, can realize the after peace of victory. For she had accepted

the sorrow God sent, which she never really had done till then,—and when accepted, Divine aid came to help her to bear it patiently, cheerfully, willingly taking up the lowly duties of life, as services to be rendered for Christ's sake.

Hence deeds by which submission was cemented, seals of trust, set to that struggle-hour that had tried my Maud.

In the alcove nook, which the sons and daughters call my special retreat, there hangs a little picture that has become to me a type of this struggle in Maud's soul, and I find myself desiring to put its story down in words.

It is nothing more than a fisher-girl leaning against a craggy cliff, with her hand resting on a heavy burden by her side.

All about are the signs of desolation; the wide sea-beach strewn with signs of wreck, telling of peril on the deep; but the form of the girl, the utter weariness of her attitude speaks of a deeper desolation,—a heart desolation.

You know the story at a glance.—The sailor she loved will never come back ; you know young though she is, she has come to that age of the heart, “when Hope is only a remembered thing, like a fair bird flown away down the golden mists of the valley of youth,” and thus her gaze is backward.

This is the visible picture ;—a tender, sad picture, but nothing more, save for the on-reaching suggestion it holds, and which any thoughtful observer straightway divines, for somehow one feels only for a brief time, the fisher-girl rests,—soon she will be on her way again ; she will lift her burden,—and take up life and daily duties.

And, as in thought we pass on to this sequel, we seem to see beyond the wreck-strewn shore, beyond the heart-ache looking from her eyes, on to a time, when because the duties of life were bravely resumed, somehow the bitterness of the sorrow lessened.

This is the little picture I link with thoughts of my Maud, perchance because my eyes rested on it as I lifted my gaze from watching

her bowed figure sitting under the shadow of
the old oak tree, Maud's favorite seat ever
since that hour, for it was there,

"In awe she listened."—

Ah, what wondrous words my child heard;
Christ's words,—“Peace be still,”—“Let not
your heart be troubled,”—“Blessed are they
that mourn,”—“Follow thou Me.”

Hearkening to these breathings of the
Spirit, no wonder the shade

“Passed from her soul away,”—as,
“In low trembling voice she cried,
Lord, help me to obey.”

No wonder in that hour,

“The Blessing fell upon her soul,
. . . . the hour of peace, came.”—

“God's right-hand angel, bright and strong,
Christ's strengthener in the agony,
Teach us the meaning of that psalm,
Of fullness only known by thee :
'Thy will be done !' we sit alone
And grief within our hearts grows strong
With passionate moaning till thou come,
And turn it to a song.

“Come when the days go heavily,
 Weighed down with burdens hard to bear ;
When joy and hope fail utterly,
 And leave us fronted with despair ;
Come not with flattering earthly light,
 But with those clear, grand eyes that see
 Straight toward eternity.

“Teach us to watch when work seems vain,
 This is half victory over fate,
To match ourselves against our pain ;
 The rest is done when we can wait.
Unveil our eyes to see how rife
 With bloom the thorny path may be
 Which only Thou canst see.”

IV.

MOTHER'S EXTRACTS CONTINUED.

THE story of my Eulalie, it has been sweet, pure, glad as a song, all the long days of her life.

Well-chosen was my text for her: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," for verily she has ever seemed to walk in the light of His love.

Till now, when she is at the meridian of her years, on her dear face there rests "the perfect loveliness of a woman's countenance; the peace which is founded in the memory of happy and useful years, full of sweet records, —joined with the abiding child-likeness which is still full of change and promise, opening always, and bright with hope of better things to be won and to be bestowed."

And yet, she too has been tried; the sin-

cerity of her life's chief purpose—consecration to Christ—has been tested,—but it has been by joy, not by sorrow.

She expressed something of wherein she found the discipline of life, in a letter which I copy, for it holds the essence, I think, of what I may call the soul's hour of decision in Eulalie's experience.

The decision of submitting,—because it is God's will,—to accepting without a murmur, the truth that is wont to creep shadow-like, close to every earthly joy,—the lack of permanency, where permanency seems such a precious thing.

• “I am so happy,”—thus Eulalie wrote at a date that counted half on to a double decade after her marriage day,—“so happy, dear mother, you know our life, Arthur's and mine, the ideal, I think, of wedded joy; a life that is truly as much, rather more, in its daily unfolding a love-song, than it was when first we began to tread its pathway hand in hand.

“And yet,——

“Only one brief time have tears fallen in our home in all this lapse of years, for a sorrow that touched our hearts, through our own hearts, and not through sympathy for the troubles of others.

“You know what that loss was,—how ‘the hope that was like music,’ passed away in silence, you know, too, mother, how.

“‘The loss that brought us pain,
. . . . But made us love the more,’

And yet,—

“And now, hopes that are not silent, what a joyous carol of young voices they ring out in our home.

“Think, mother, of your Eulalie, with two strong lads of her own, and the baby girl, with eyes blue as my husband’s,—yes, I am happy, so happy!

“And yet,—

“And then Arthur’s life, how rich it is in the power of helping others, and never a deed of kindness, a free-handed liberality does my husband plan, in which I do not share,—and

all the honor he has won, this husband of mine, it is like a crown of glory to me his wife.

“And yet,—

“Do you ask me why this repeated yet runs through my letter like a dark thread through a fabric of golden warp and woof?—Because, mother, I am afraid of my own happiness. You know what the Bible says, ‘The Lord loveth whom He chasteneth.’—Does not God love us, and is this why the years come and go laden every succeeding one, with deeper content and gladness?—Is it that God does not love us, that He lets us thus escape chastening?—I am afraid, I tremble, as I take my joyful life and clasp it close to my heart,—yes, I am afraid. You know, too, how the poet sings :

“‘Unbroken sunshine and perpetual heat,
Make deserts only,—clouds that bring no rain
Shelter no gardens.’

“Can it be our heart garden-plots will parch into barren deserts, because of too much sunshine? Will there be no flowers because no tears water them?

“Or,—can it be that joy, the very dearness of it, holds the secret of discipline, just as truly as sorrow does?—The chastening of gladness,—can there be such a thing?—

“I have been trying to follow this query, but I lose my way so easily,—and yet, I think, last night as I sat alone for awhile, I did meet and grasp it. I think I hold the thread now that unravels the intricate coil of joy’s discipline,—and do you know, mother, it was hard for me to bow and humbly accept the knowledge that its discipline is in its very uncertainty of permanence; this not knowing what the morrow holds, that bounds the way of the gladdest, as well as the saddest heart.—Oh, I think it is hard to accept cheerfully.

“And then, the temptation to be satisfied with the present life of happiness; why, it is so strong, verily I could say:

“‘Would God renew me from my birth,
I’d almost live my life again.’

“And yet this satisfaction and joy in temporal things,—for I know God means them to

be joy-giving,—is just what I must hold with a heart-willingness to relinquish without a murmur, if He wills it best.

“Rebellion at the possibility of loss and change,—rebellion at the uncertainty of all perishable things, herein is, I think, the temptation of prosperity, submitting to this lack of permanency, the chastening of joy.

“This was the truth I met yesterday as I sat alone, remembering my joys, and I tried to submit to it, tried to take them all in my heart,—my joys that are so dear,—as Hannah took the child Samuel in her arms to offer him to the Lord.

“Yes, I tried to offer them as gifts of submission, back to the great Giver’s hand, prayed that I might walk softly in my gladness, and even as I thus prayed, darkness like a cloud before the sun, fell over my heart, the test of the question was so hard.

“Could I, for Christ’s sake, relinquish without a murmur, my dearest?—Even the first whisper of the query made me tremble.

“But,—I did meet it.”

"I did meet it,"—as I read that brief line traced in my Eulalie's hand, out from the words I seemed to catch the sound of a true, saint-like echo of faith, beating in my Eulalie's soul.

And that echo of submission to God's will, in continuing or withholding her treasures, and of acknowledging that all her joys were God-given, was of more worth to me, her mother, than all the deeds of loving charity, and sweet ministry that for years had borne witness to my Eulalie's heart's right to the claim of Lady, which legally her husband's title had conferred on her.

"Lady,"—Do you remember Ruskin's definition of the word?

"Lady means 'bread-giver,' and a Lady has claim to her title only so far as she communicates that help to the poor representatives of her Master, which women once ministering to Him of their substance, were permitted to extend to that Master Himself, and where she is known as He Himself once was, in the breaking of bread."——

How the loaves multiplied under the Master's touch.—And may they not multiply under ours, if given in faith?

Think,—the material bread, how it becomes if offered in the spirit of Christ-taught love, not only food of physical refreshment, but the bread of sympathy, too, of comfort, of strength, of blessing, and of life.

Truly this Gospel bread, the faith-touched loaves, is like the manna of old, enough for all who seek it,—only the giver and the receiver must, like the manna gatherers of Israel, obey the conditions that secure its supply.

It must be *daily* bread, *daily* sought; “Give us this day our *daily bread*.”

To-day's grace, not to-morrow's, for “the morrow will take thought for the things of itself.”

Turning from my Eulalie's peaceful, joy-encompassed life to Zita's, full as it is of perplexity, hard work, and hourly contact with suffering and death, is like coming to one of those places in life where two cross-roads meet.

The one pathway like so many of our English roads and lanes, bounded by green hedges and starred with flowers, primroses and daisies, golden buttercups and cowslips, the other a rugged path, up-hill all the way.

“Does the road wind up-hill all the way?”

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day’s journey take the whole long day?

From morn till night, my friend.”

This is the path my Zita treads.

Her work has greatly increased within the last six months; she is at home again, but the memory of those war-days is as fresh in her mind as the note of bugle or drum-beat heard but yesterday.

While as for myself, though two full years divides me from the time, I can not lose out of my heart the thanksgiving and the joy of that May morning when Eulalie and Arthur, Maud and I stood on Portsmouth pier and watched the approaching vessel; a mere speck at first, but that grew as the distance lessened, till at last even my old eyes could distinguish

Zita's slender form clinging to Yvo's strong arm.

And then, the brave ship that had rode the waves, bowed before the winds, anchored at last in the desired haven, within sight of the white cliffs of England,—and an hour later my son and daughter stood again on English ground.

Come back to me!—the same, and yet so changed,—they had gone in the morning-time of their life and experience, and now it was mid-day to those two, whatever age the years counted, for life had been a solemn, earnest thing to them.—Zita had not witnessed suffering without suffering; Yvo,—but I will not speak of him now;—and she had stood by many a dying man; she had watched many a hard, long struggle, as the mortal put on immortality. And these struggles had not always been the soul's going from night to day,—there was the great sorrow of it,—but when it was, my Zita told me, it seemed to her many a time the spirit, just before it said good-bye to the earthly tabernacle, turned as it were,

and left a look of peace on the brow, of holy calm on the face, that was like the last beam of sunset falling on a mountain side's darkness; and always she told me, too, when that look came and left its impress on the dying, it seemed to her a message from the Home to to which the spirit had gone.

Some of Zita's experiences those days when she held the position of hospital nurse in the crowded wards of the old barrack hospital at Delhi, are as tender as songs in the night; as touching as the pathos of reality can make them.

Many were the little souvenirs she brought home to one and another brave soldier's dear one, mother, wife, child, or troth-plighted maiden,—some coming as tokens from the departed,—gifts from the dead to the living, as we use the words in our earthly language, and some gifts from the living to the living.

I can see now the library table, strewn with those simple mementoes, as Zita, with touch gentle as though they had been of priceless worth, assorted and re-labelled one small

package after another, that by the next day's post was to wing its way to many a fireside from one end of England to the other.

There was nothing of any great value among them, but of all the gifts costly and rich, beautiful and rare, that ever my eyes had beheld, none ever seemed to me so full of heart-meaning, as those simple rings and seals, cut and polished by the senders' own hands; the stones, blades of grass, and in one case grains of sand, from the graves of those who will never come back to their homes in this sea-girt, happy English Isle.

Watching Zita busy with this task of love, I fell into wondering, wherein this daughter of mine, who had been so blessed in the gifts of "talents," to which she had "gained beside them five talents more" had found the discipline of life.—Had it come to her as a temptation, or as some trial of faith?

Later on she told me, and later on I will tell you, but I pause a minute first over those words, "gained beside them five talents more."

What are the Gospel-recorded talents which the Lord entrusts to us every one?

Are they "opportunities for serving God"—and is that why one grows into two?—I think it must be; I think the law of Nature in dealing with her plants and flowers holds good in the Scriptural sense of interpreting the Bible-mentioned talents, and you know in Nature's realm, one flower is but the outgrowth of the seed of another.

V.

MOTHER'S JOURNAL CONTINUED.

MY Zita and Yvo's experiences were so closely inwrought at the special time to which I now refer, and the crisis period which came to them during it, was so decided by the past tenor of their lives, that I can not well picture the one without the other.

Zita had always been to Yvo something of a sister-mother, always his help and guide; nothing was ever too much for her to give or do for him.

Then, too, their tastes and aspirations, the enthusiasm of their natures, were specially harmonious, and while the difference in their ages gave Zita a certain formative influence over Yvo, the freshness of his individuality was never merged into hers.

She gloried in his chosen profession; she

thought it the noblest in the world ; and Yvo's consecration of his young energies, the strength of his youth to the study, and afterwards the practice of relieving suffering, healing the sick and pain-stricken, was to Zita a more beautiful and grander thing than if he had stood before the world a crowned king in the realms of art, science, poetry, or philosophy.

Yes, though Hugh our soldier, was a darling brother to her, and she exulted in his valiant deeds and dauntless courage, Yvo was her hero, his life of active service, bounded though it was by hospital walls and hospital wards, was the heroic life.

And when he received the appointment of assistant surgeon in the regiment in which Hugh was at that time captain, Zita sailed away with him over the wide sea, to far-off India, with a song in her heart, though she knew that ocean voyage was the gateway leading to much of danger, privation, and service, that would try not only nerve and courage, but hand and heart.

But I have no time to detail the experiences

of their life in India, Yvo's as surgeon, and Zita's as nurse, for though it was marked by much that touched them both closely, it is a still closer experience which I would now portray.

To Zita not many months before she sailed away from us, there had come that something, which suddenly had made her heart flutter, as though it had been a girl's heart, made all the future shine with the radiance of a dream-like beauty.

But she did not hearken to its pleading, steadfastly she put the dream aside.

"My duty," she had said, "is with Yvo; my life I have pledged myself to devote to him, and the sick and suffering, and not to leave that service from any motive of weariness, desire for change, or dream of happiness, no—it can not be."

And whatever struggle this resolve may have cost her heart at that time, no sign of it left impress on her face, or wonted cheerful brightness of spirit. Just here I should say, Zita went forth on this mission of healing,

bound by no rules, she belonged to no sisterhood; it was voluntary service, but none the less active and full.

For the months immediately following their arrival in India, were among the darkest of the dark months, during which

“The poor man’s stay and comfort,
The rich man’s joy and pride,
Fell fighting side by side.”

And Zita went among those poor, wounded men, with a gentle tenderness, that made her to them, an angel of blessing.

She seemed, so my sons have told me, to hold the key that unlocked their hearts, and she never found entrance to these citadels, that can not be taken by force, without leaving in them some leaf of comfort from the Tree of Life, every leaf of which is for healing.

She believed,—and she acted on the belief, “in every human being, unless he be completely hardened,” and I have often heard Zita say, she never met one who was *completely*, “there is still one bright spot, one

point of susceptibility for that which is good, and this is the point by which to take hold of him and raise him, so that the light which is in him may gradually dispel the darkness."

But I must hasten on to Zita's trial-test, for it was drawing near, the shadow of it was beginning to fall even on those days, when her service seemed so fruitful.

Zita had made one great mistake, and it was this that she had to meet and conquer, before she could come out from the testing like gold, tried in the fire's crucible.

Her mistake was, that while she had been brave and noble in self-abnegation for Yvo's sake, and self-sacrificing for the sake of the work, to which she had from girlhood desired to give the strength of her life, in both cases, it had been *self* that had achieved the victory, and not the *self* mastery, which in humbleness of spirit, acknowledges *self* nothing, but the grace of God all.

"I will do it," Zita had said, and as she thus said, her heart beat high with the consciousness of what a grand thing it was to cast aside

earthly love and joy for the sake of ministering to the suffering, and helping and encouraging Yvo; and in that heart-beat of self-gratulation, even before the words, "*I will*," had found utterance in her voice, there had rooted in her heart the tiny plant,—spiritual pride,—that is wont to be at first appearing, of lowly growth in human hearts,—so lowly, that keen must be the watching that detects its first upshoot, but, that when once fairly rooted, sends out strong tendrils, that like the net-work of the wild vine, clings about flower and plant, till at last the flower and the plant are hidden by its greenery of foliage.

"In my own strength,"—yes, it was Zita's mistake,—when she told me of the hour, when she was brought to the full knowledge of this, humbly as a little child, she confessed her former pride and self-sufficiency,——and so thankful was she,—though the discovery of it had been hard, the struggle to up-root it harder still,—that God had sent the trial that showed her how empty her services were, how weak her strength of purpose, except as it was Christ's strength made perfect in weakness.

Thus from the learning of her own heart's weakness, the saint-like echo of a higher life, began to sound in my Zita's,—thus not from the doing of great deeds, the rendering of active services that haloed her outward life, was she crowned victor, but because Christ became all, *self* nothing.

And when this had taken place, soft and sweet as the music of sea waves, creeping up on the low-lying shore of a pleasant land when the night is calm, in my Zita's heart, love,—not such as the poet sings of, but love in the nighest, fullest meaning,—

‘Took up the harp of life, and smote on all the chords
with might,
Smote on the chord of *self*, that trembling, passed in
music out of sight.’

After that hour, no matter what the service, great or small, it was done unto Him,—after that hour,

“Every leaf and every nook,
Every wave in every brook,
Chanting with a solemn voice,
'Minded of her better choice.’”

It is a simple story repeated in these commonplace words,—this of Zita's, we see it duplicated time after time in lives that like hers are engaged in active service.

Christian lives, for my Zita was a Christian all that time, even when she let self become so absorbed in work that she left untended the silent, sweet growth of spiritual dependence on the Master,—a growth that needs much prayer, hours of meditation, closet hours, with closed doors, for without them, speedily active service grows into a weed, rather than a flower.

You remember how quaint old Herbert expresses this truth,

“But while I grow in a straight line,
Still upwards bent, as if Heaven *were mine own*,
Thy anger comes,—and I decline.”

But I began to tell how my Zita discovered *self* in her heart.

It came about in such a natural way, as most of the deeper experiences of our lives do. Telling me of it, she said:

“It never once occurred to me but that I was chief in Yvo's affections, and I must con-

fess, in my pride, I thought too, my encouraging, counselling, and sympathy in his work, was as needful to him as sunlight to flowers.

“ I saw Mildred Gray, the chaplain’s daughter, time after time. I knew she and Yvo were friends, but never once did I think she was more to him than a pleasant acquaintance, as were nearly all of the officers’ wives and daughters who had lingered at that post of danger.

“ But when suddenly I did know it, my heart rebelled ; I said I could not, I would not have it ; said it not to Yvo, but to myself.

“ It was the day following one of the fiercest engagements of that time, so marked by battle and loss.

“ All day we had been going from one and another poor wounded soldier lad ; my heart was heavy with the weight of woe I could not relieve ; my spirit darkened by the great problem of permitted suffering.

“ I walked with tears in my eyes, as I turned from one crowded ward to another,—and it was just in that turning, that I met one of those crises in the soul’s history which come heralded

by neither matin or vesper bell, but that strike the note of an hour that gives us the 'means of deeper self-knowledge,—and reads off the reckoning of our spirits, and tells us whether we more deeply live or more begin to die.'

"The space that I crossed was no more than the going from one room into another, but it was just there that I saw Yvo,—my heart was full of him,—you know how it is when one is thinking other thoughts, we do yet so carry the abiding consciousness of our dearest,—and I realized all of trying service that day had held for my surgeon brother; who was as pitiful of wounds and suffering, as a mother over the hurt of her child; who never, though he had become so familiar with it, had become wonted in the sense of insensibility to the sight of the physical misery war wrought.

"On seeing him, I quickened my steps; he was halting to speak to a nurse, a volunteer; I straightway noticed, for my eyes had become accustomed to the regulation dress, and as is the way in intense moments, I was quick to note the least thing.

“ I did not think of Mildred, there was nothing to suggest her in the figure kneeling by the low stretcher, on which a dying corporal was breathing away the fast-waning earthly life. As I stood by Yvo’s side, she was holding in her hand some soothing draught ; her face was turned from me ; then, too, it was of Yvo I was thinking ; up to him I looked through the misty veil of my tears, but Yvo’s eyes, they did not answer mine ; his gaze was fixed on that kneeling figure,—and by that gaze I knew there was one nearer and dearer to my brother’s heart than I, who had thought myself all.

“ A glance told me it was Mildred Gray. I did not linger to speak, I went on ; there were sufferers, and sufferers needing help.

“ The night had waned, gray dawn was beginning to give place to a faint glimmer of daylight, when I sought rest for a brief hour or two.

“ Misery had appalled me that night ; the infinite pathos of suffering had come close to me,—and yet,—as I lay down and closed my

eyes, the sweet past of my childhood and youth in the old home, in our happy England, came clothed in tender colors, and led me backward.

“Those thoughts at first were strangely peaceful, to have been prefaced by such scenes of woe, verily like that picture of the lamb feeding on the grass that up-sprang around the cannon’s mouth.

“But that peace was not a tarrying guest ; memory’s tide when it set heart-ward, drifted up along with the sea-flowers and the shells, sea-weeds and bits of wreck, and swiftly as a bird wings its way from north to south, I was back again in the shady lane that leads by the brook-side, beyond the park, where the cranes-bill, speedwell, and forget-me-nots grow. I saw the flowers blooming there when last I trod the path, as plainly as if my eyes all day and night had not been looking on scenes of woe and bloodshed.

“I seemed to hear again the notes of the nightingale, and the very tones of the voice that interpreted its song :

“ ‘Set in a cadence bright
Singing our loftiest dream, that we thought none did
know.’

“Ah! Yvo, he heard (as I thought) the night-
ingales sing in his heart that night, too; but
it was a song of the present Yvo heard,—not
of the past, like mine.

“With the memory of that voice, came the
vision I had thought forever gone, of a home
which might have been, a love,—which I had
cast out of my heart, because I would be all
to Yvo.

“Yes, I saw then, everything was so real, in
that hour when I had just come from minis-
tering to many a one who had passed in the
silence and darkness of the night within the
valley of shadows; I saw then it was for Yvo
I had given up the joy that seemed so sweet,
so dear, that twilight, when I walked down
the English lane, where the flowers grew; for
Yvo, not from consecration to Christ, but be-
cause I said in my heart, Yvo needs me, I will
be all to him; exalting *self*, while in my blind-
ness I thought I was abnegating it,—and then

everything was so real, I repeat, out of my recognized rebellion at another's coming to be more in Yvo's heart than I was, even though I had said in my self-sureness his happiness was more to me than my own,—came as though a veil had been rent and torn by some strong hand from before a half-concealed picture, a clear sight of my heart and all its self-assertion;—and it did not spare me that sight; it revealed the growth of a self that held its own high service to sufferers close, as one holds some treasure of their own finding. —I saw,—what it meant to become a little child,—and,—that is all, mother;—you see it is nothing in the telling.”—

Thus my Zita ended her recital, adding: “But—it was much to me in the living.”

A brief hour; but in it began self-mastery in my Zita's heart.

Only began, no work in the soul of man, or by the hand of man, that is worth the doing is accomplished without labor; no heart is emptied of self without a struggle.

The King's daughter, glorious within, is only
"perfect through my comeliness which I put
upon thee, saith the Lord God."

The garment of humility; the robe of
Christ's righteousness, not her own, from that
hour, this robe of the saints enwrapt my Zita.

And who are the saints?

Old Luther says:

"Those who in their necessity comfort
themselves no otherwise than because they
have Christ the Son of God as their Saviour;
those who keep close to His word."

And His word?—Lo, it is, "Humble your-
self, and I will lift you up.—Do all for the
glory of God."

Well named was my Zita,—well chosen her
beatitude promise: "Blessed are the meek."

VI.

CONTINUED EXTRACTS.

AS the trial of seeing her own heart and its weakness came to Zita through the discovery that Yvo loved, there came to Yvo from that love a trial-test too.

Mildred Gray was a gentle, quiet girl, somewhat thoughtful and grave for one so young, —she was but twenty at that time; she never trifled with Yvo with the gay caprice of a girl's changing mood, but no sooner did she catch in his look and voice, the something of deeper tenderness than his gaze or his tone were wont to hold for any other, than by her sweet, calm will, and gentle purpose to save him pain, she straightway held herself so remote from him that he found no opportunity to pass the quiet barrier of reserve, and put into uttered words, the earnest feeling, the gaze held, and the tone hinted.

And though Yvo was quick to see this, though he felt she did not love him, he could wait, he said to himself; he was young,—and the thought that already there might be another than himself of whom Mildred dreamed when the far-away look came into her blue eyes, the faint smile played about her rosy lips, never once occurred to him,—she was so dear to him, somehow he took it for granted, he must in time become dear to her.

Not till that hour, when Zita had seen and rebelled against the light in his eyes, as he looked down on Mildred's kneeling figure, did Yvo make discovery that there was another.

Zita had gone; he too, though he still remained in the same ward, had passed on to render services requiring the skillful touch of a trained hand, to one and another of the wounded, bullet-pierced, and sword-cut soldier-lads, that so bravely tried to suppress their groans of pain.

The light was somewhat dim in that hastily constructed barrack hospital; but the beams

from a swinging lamp fell full on Mildred's figure.

It was still, too, in that place of suffering,—those suppressed groans, a whispered word, an occasional moan; these and the labored, heavy breathing of dying men were the only sounds.

A step coming up the space,—that separated like a path the long line of stretchers on which the sufferers lay,—broke the hush, as the sudden striking of a clock breaks the stillness of a midnight hour.

Yvo turned to note the incomer; a tall figure, soldierly and brave in his bearing, though in army rank but a lieutenant, Yvo saw from the epaulet insignia that shone as he paused beneath the rays of that lamp-light that fell so full on Mildred.

At the sound of that footfall, Mildred too turned,—and then,—her face so pale and wan with watching, suddenly grew rosy, her eyes full of the tender light of love.—

But she spoke no word,—she only lifted her little hand, that looked so small, so white,

such a tender thing, as for a moment it was held in the firm clasp of the youth,—who said no word either.

And then his step sounded again, not to pause, till he came to the wounded comrade he was seeking.

And, just as Mildred's gaze, that had been uplifted for a second to the new-comer, was returning again to the watching of the dying corporal,—who was growing restless now,—her eyes met Yvo's. He had drawn near, and was standing by her side again,—and,——Yvo, he was a brave, true-hearted man, noble as a knight of old, loyal and pure in his love for this maiden, Mildred Gray—he accepted the story in Mildred's eyes, and reverently, as though bowing above some dear one's grave, he bowed his head—and,—he too passed on.

Thus that night, when Zita struggled with the selfishness of her heart, that wanted to be first in Yvo's love; when she was thinking how her brother was listening to the nightingales of hope, singing songs in his heart, even amid the dark scenes of suffering that surrounded

him, Yvo was hearing no nightingale's song of hope and love.

He only knew he went on, and did his duty,—he only knew, death was a fierce reaper that night.

He felt no weariness, he took no heed of passing hours,—no,—he went on, like one who walks some high-road and yet seeks no goal.

And now I must crowd the story of months and years into a brief space.

Quick as one day followed another, battle followed battle at that time,—and,—it was only the next sundown, when into that barrack hospital there was much coming and going.

But Yvo seemed to see but one man among the hundreds wounded, and all the strength of his will, all the skill of his profession, was concentrated in saving the faint, fast ebbing life of that one.

Was he high in rank?——No.—Was he one dear from long friendship or tie of kinship? No,—he was a stranger to Yvo; only once, and that for a brief minute in the flickering light

of a dimly burning lamp, had he seen the face of the young soldier, who lifted his eyes to his with such a look of mute appeal in them.

Yvo needed no word to interpret that look, Yvo, my son, whose benediction verse, chosen in his babyhood, has been so true a type of himself.—“Blessed are the merciful.”—

At the first summons Mildred came; her father was with her, Chaplain Gray, who had grown old in his work of love, and whose place my Herbert was even then sailing over the wide sea to fill.

Five minutes later it was all over,—silence, —never to be broken on earth, had set its seal to Mildred’s young love.

It was Zita who told me all this,—and who told me, too, how during the months that followed, before Mildred and her father left the grave of the young stranger in that battle-field burial-place, and sailed home to England, Yvo was tender of her as a brother.

Zita, who told me of his nobleness of heart when put to the test; of his striving with all the might of his surgical knowledge and skill, to

save the life of that stricken soldier youth ; of how he cast self out of sight, as he tried appliance and remedy, not only from loyal adherence to the motto of every true surgeon and physician, "To save life, to relieve suffering," but for the sake of Mildred, who loved the youth,—and of how when all failed, self was still forgotten in caring for Mildred.

All this Zita told me, but it was Yvo himself, who told me the something more.

It was a spring day, close following his and Zita's return from India, I walked with my son alone. We crossed the rustic bridge that spans the river, just beyond the gate of the park. The hazel rods were tasseled with catkins, primroses, and wild anemones were blooming in flowery clumps amid the green grass-blades ; and it was then that Yvo told me the strength to rise above his sorrow, was not because he was strong in his manhood, but because he accepted it as a God-sent trial of the faith in his soul, which needed to be tried by the loss, or rather the withholding of the thing most dear, before its submission to a will Higher than his own, could be tested.

Two years elapsed between that spring twilight when Yvo talked with me of what submission meant; of how, even while it permits a longing to fill the heart for the thing which

“Looks so sweet—looks so dear,”

it holds the power of enabling the soul to draw a lesson from loss, revealing the good that is in it, and to be found by the faith-seeker.

Two years, I say, since that twilight, and through them my Yvo had never once flagged at his post of duty, in one of the largest of London hospitals. — A position that was awarded him immediately on his retiring from the army, on returning from India.

Two years, and then again he and Mildred Gray met. — I will not picture that meeting, nor those that followed, I only tell this sequel of my Yvo's story, because it is so sweet to me.

Enough, when they met, Mildred was an orphan; old Chaplain Gray, work-worn and

weary, had laid his head down like a tired child when the home-land was reached, and the Heavenly Father had given the old man the sleep, that is the prelude of awakening, that "He giveth to His beloved."

Zita was with Yvo, and it was Zita who met Mildred,——Zita, who found her so greatly changed within those two years,—Zita, who told Yvo of the change, and this was why he sought her.

What could he do?—and then those two, my Zita and Yvo, ministered to the girl, who seemed fading away, even while the spring was opening in its glad promise of bud and blossom.

It was midsummer,—and Mildred's face had grown whiter, her little hand thinner since the spring,—when Yvo stood by the low cushioned-chair on which she sat, leaning her tired head against the soft covering; stood there, strong in the vigor of his manhood, and told at last the story that Zita had seen in his eyes that hour in the hospital barrack.

And Mildred, she did not say nay to it;—

he knew her heart, the silent chapter in it,—he knew of that grave on India's plain.

So it was settled; he was to take her to his heart, his home. Mildred Gray was to be his wife.

And now I pass over a wide space of time; years fled, and during them Mildred, guarded and watched like a flower by Yvo and Zita, slowly came back to health and strength.

Years, during which Yvo never once asked if the old ache in her heart had found rest in the new joy, for he knew his love was a joy to Mildred, even though before ever she consented to wed she had told him she could never give what she had given,—“because it is gone,”—these were Mildred's words.

Then there came a day when Yvo did not walk amid his patients in the crowded hospital wards, but when he kept watch in his own home from dawn to set of sun.—Just as the day was waning, Zita held in her loving arms the little tender baby, God had sent to Yvo and Mildred.

And now I must hasten,—one glimpse more

into my Yvo's heart, and then we will leave him.

It was a Sabbath evening, quiet and peaceful; Mildred held the baby with his little cheek nestled close against her own, and as she held the child, her own head rested on her husband's shoulder; and she looked up at him, and their eyes met as they had done twice before in intense moments of their lives,—moments when their souls had opened out before one another.

It was Mildred who spoke; going back as though there were no years between, to the time when Yvo had asked her to be his wife, softly she said:

“No,—I can not give you the love I gave another,—but—but—I give you more.”

Yvo's text—“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy,” in golden letters my Zita illumined it for him, when because he felt it her due, he told her of this joy.

When she gave it to him, he smiled and said:

"I thought the promise was all for *There*, not here."

And she replied, this daughter of mine,—Zita, whom the children in their youth were wont to call our prophetess,—in a tone low with reverent awe; Zita never lightly uttered Gospel words:

"Surely the meaning is, that the Lord deals with us as we deal with others,"—and because she had learned the grace of not saying overmuch when hearts are full, she did not add the other far-reaching thoughts, that to any thoughtful mind, nod out from that promise as blossoms on a flower-starred branch nod out, and give forth their fragrance when the summer wind in its gentle waving, sways them back and forth.

A long story, do you say, this of my Yvo's,—and where do I catch the saint-like echo in it?

Where?—why, in that hour when he accepted disappointment not in rebellion, but in submission,—when he went bravely on his way doing his duty and remembering,

“ We must be here to work ;
And men who work can only work for men.
And not to work in vain, must comprehend
Humanity, and so work humanly
And raise men’s bodies still by raising souls,
As God did first.”

When,

“ He showed
How out of that submission, flowed the strength
For noblest acts of love,
. . . . The mine and thine
Of selfish right he scattered to the winds.”

When,

“ His soul had learnt
. . . . that God is great,
God the compassionate, the merciful ;
And yielding up his will to God’s, the three,
Compassion, mercy, greatness, were as one.”

VII.

EXTRACTS STILL.

AND now only a brief space is left for my Hugh,—but it is all that is needed ; for in former pages in this book of remembrance, I revealed how I caught the first notes of saint-like echoes in his soul, that like one climbing some light-house stairway, was struggling up above temptation and wrong, till at last the clear light of firm adherence to duty could be hung in that light-house tower,—the deeds of a man,—its beams shining full and bright on the storm-tossed waves of life's ocean.

My Hugh,—yes, he struggled harder against tangible temptations than any of my children ; I mean by that word tangible, outward wrongdoing,—but remember,—

“ 'Tis one thing to be tempted,
Another thing to fall.”

(246)

I recall so well the hour when long years ago in his babyhood, I wrote Hugh's name in my Bible, against the verse—"Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake."

I questioned in my heart as to why I chose it. Persecuted; it seemed such a hard word; and persecution, it was a something that so belonged to by-gone times, at least it seemed so on the first reading.

And yet, as I looked on Hugh even in his infancy, I knew the quick, impulsive, but tenderly loving nature that smiled out from his dark eyes, were plain enough indications that his was a sensitive, keenly sympathetic heart, open to influences; to whom the saying of no, when it involved a question of right that contained even so slight a thing as annoyance to another, would hold the essence of a pain akin to persecution; and that in more important things, *would* be persecution to his own nature, and if done from a sense of right, verily become persecution for righteousness' sake.

And I detected, too, that victory would be

no lightly won mastery in my Hugh's heart ; I knew how when he thought he had conquered, he would be brought again face to face with the temptation that had seemed robbed of its power to lure.

I knew, just as he thought some love of wrong cast away, it would come again,—the fight need to be renewed.

I knew, “deeper even than these forms of temptation would be the conflict in his soul between tendencies to sin, as they rose into consciousness, and the influences that would deliver his soul from them.”

I knew he would take “no step forward,”—Can any of us?—“without contending with evil.”

And while the heart fails at this constant struggle between right and wrong, there is something grand in it too, something inspiring in the knowledge, that “in our upward way, every step we take must be on a conquered temptation”; something that keeps one humble in the knowledge, that we can only take these upward steps by seeking a

strength Higher than our own ; something so beautiful in the knowing, too, if we take them, clinging like a trusting child to the heavenly Hand of guidance then,—even though we be persecuted by temptations without and temptations within ;—yet ours will be the joy of those to whom is promised, “the kingdom of Heaven.”

And I thank God that my Hugh early accepted the truth, “that wherever there is spiritual combat there is temptation, for that is what temptation means.”

Other trials, too, met Hugh as he trod the path of life.

Trials of faith, submission, and patience. When he and Grace came home to us,—a year later than Zita and Yvo returned,—they left a child’s grave in India.

A little grave often visited by Herbert and Mary, whose life-work is still in that far-off land.

And the pale, languishing little blossom of a maiden they brought with them, was taken home to Heaven scarcely a twelvemonth after their arrival.

So they were left childless,—so their faith was tried,—for it tries faith, to say when God takes little children,—“Thy will be done.”

We did not go to Portsmouth to meet Hugh and Grace, they came straightway to us at the Hall.

They had told me Hugh was changed,—Grace had written of the shattered arm, the crippled limbs, my battle-scarred soldier son, that was coming back to me in place of the strong, beautiful Hugh who had left me.

And yet,—when he came,—my mother-heart, my mother-eyes, refused for a moment to believe it was my Hugh.

But his voice, one note of it; his dear eyes, one glance of them, and his head was pillowed on my breast where it had nestled in his babyhood.

Yes, my loving child,—my child of benediction, he had come back to me.

VIII.

STILL MORE EXTRACTS.

BRITTA, dear child,—“our shining light”: must I trace a story that tells of struggle in her glad life?

Verily if there have been in her experience, times when clouds have encompassed her; clouds of temptation, disappointment, and failure in being all she has aspired to be in singleness of purpose in serving the Lord, they have been like the clouds on which I gazed last night, looking from the tower window at sunset.

There had been a shower; the wide open sky-view we catch from that elevated outlook was one mass of billowy grayish white clouds, with just a faint rosy glow toward the eastern horizon, when Maud called me to come and look at the beauty, that faint hint of color promised.

A promise that speedily was verified ; for as though some angel of light floated on rosy wing before the heaviest of the storm-clouds, a glow, delicate and clear in tone as the pink of the sea-shell, flushed the cloud bank till it glowed in a radiance bright as my Britta's life,—and then,—wonder of wonders, as though the beauty of rose-tinting were not enough, the banded glory of the tri-colored arch shone on cloud and rosy brightness, while like the beat of some pulsing life, the gleam of a lightning-flash played for a moment across rainbow and rosy cloud.

Verily, I repeat, it was a sky-picture, fitting to be a type of my Britta.

For I know in her case, as in the lives of my other children, trials will come, there will be clouds, rain will fall, even if her bright spirit illumine the clouds with the rosy hues of trust, even if her faith bows the tears with hope.

“Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.”

This is Britta's Bible promise, and while thus far in life, peace has come to her in rest from external trouble, external conflict and pain; while she has been a peace-maker, in the constant giving of peace and joy to others, I know she has as yet trod but the first steps in her pilgrimage, and that while this peace gives a deep enjoyment to my Britta, I know there is a deeper peace awaiting her, when her peace is "repose after spiritual conflict,—when her faith has stood the test of trial, and she has looked beyond the joy of the present time, and caught a glimpse of the peace of God, which 'passeth understanding.'"

God grant the road may not be very rough that guides my Britta into this way of peace. God grant the rainbow may ever span the storm-clouds.

Britta's life is so glad now, I feel a mother's longing to picture it,—her home is the dearest little nest in all England, I think, and she reigns queen of it.

Mr. Morris, her husband, is a man of independent means, yet a busy man.—

But not too busy to find time to indulge Britta's fondness for flitting like a bird, for many a month in the year, from one country to another.

Thus when the harsh days of winter come, into our quiet home,—for the Hall is a quiet place now,—words from her bring gleams of Italy's sunshine, or the brightness of sunny France,—and when summer reigns over the land, many are the white-winged missives she sends, like breaths of refreshment from cool Highland glens, Switzerland's snow-capped Alps, or the nearer haunts that in her childhood she loved so well.—The northern coast of our own Devonshire, that is so bold in picturesque views, all about Lenton, Ilfracombe, and farther north.

The saint-like echo in my Britta's glad life?—as yet, only joy has sounded it forth.
For her thus far,

“The Dove has settled on the cross.”

But there is such a depth of earnestness, such a full recognition from Whom her blessings come, I do not fear for her future even if trials await her.

It seems whispered to my heart, that she is one of those blessed of the Lord, of whose spirit it will always be true, that

“In fearless love and hope uncloyed,
Forever on that ocean bright,”——

the ocean of God’s love, she will be

“Empowered to gaze,
Deeper and deeper to plunge in light.”

“Till—duly trained and taught,
The concord sweet with love divine,
Then,—with that inward music fraught,
Forever rise and sing and shine.”

This is how my Britta’s future looks to me, as I strive to interpret it by the present, as one interprets the future of a flower by its bud.

For she is still in the spring-time of life,—even though she has slipped on into the thirties!——in the time when sweet buds are but promises of the summer fruit.

IX.

AND now the end,—the last pages of my mother's memories.

As I began these reminiscences with thoughts of Francis, so I end them with a brief record of him, my first-born.

The one of all my eight, in whose life now, the echo of the saintly spirit of resignation, patience, and struggle amid weakness, daily sounds with the fullest harmony of reality.

I have said, before the darkening of this dear son's eyes had begun to cast a shadow over his future, his spirit was in shadow ; he had launched on the wide sea of speculative thought, and he had found no anchorage ; and yet never mariner sailed those waters of unrest and doubt, with a greater longing to find rest.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”——This is Francis’ benediction verse. I, his mother, chose it when first I saw the look of yearning for something more than earth can give, that looked out from his blue eyes, even while he was still a cradled baby.

And yet, I, his mother, have wept many a tear of grief over the discipline that led my son to the spiritual thirst, which only Christ can fill, the spiritual hunger, which only Christ can satisfy.

Blended in with the early conflict of thoughts that stirred Francis’ soul by the unsolvable mysteries of life and death, good and evil,—questions that tossed to and fro in his mind, as wind tosses tree boughs when the storm is high,—was the heart-conflict involved in his love for Grace Ward; and the bitter jealousy of Hugh that crept in to destroy for a time the fair, sweet growth of brotherly affection, as ruthlessly as sea waves overleap barrier of jutting rock and sandy shore.

And, as though the struggle of his mind to

become as a little child in faith, of his heart to rejoice over Hugh's joy, were not enough to overmaster Francis' self-will, there came that other trial that touched a bodily organ, when the light went out of the world for him, and all beautiful things in nature, and the dear faces of his best loved ones, the printed pages of books that were like friends, became as remembered pictures,—I can not detail the spiritual conflict my son waged,—I can not picture how he broke the chain of mental bondage, that sought to bound faith by sight; neither can I detail the story of the inward self-mastery with which he broke loose the clasp that had forged many a link of jealousy about his brotherly love for Hugh; nor can I tell the hour when he humbly submitted to the darkening of his eyes. I can only deal in this record of Francis with results, not processes.

And so I bridge the gulf of gloom, those years of struggle—and pass on to the time when my son accepted that tender truth,—that so takes the bitterness out of affliction,—that

“in all God’s providential dealings with us, He looks to eternal results.”

A truth that always seems to me like some far-reaching meadow of rest that opens off from a dusty highway.

I can only tell that though it was preluded by years of spiritual thirst, years of heart-hunger, the time came to my Francis when like another whose words I copy, he “began at last to understand that why no fixity was to be found in philosophy was because it is unable to inspire with divine life,”—and “for this reason he returned to the source of life in order again to draw from it peace and blessedness,—came also to the conviction that the wisdom revealed by God is destined to lay hold, not alone of feeling, but of the entire man,”——and that after this his great aim became like the one whose words I continue to copy, to “unfold the inner reasonableness and self-consistency of the Christianity which had brought peace to his heart, and vigor to his will.”

Because of this, we all, mother, brothers, and sisters, came to “look up to him as a man who

had once fought out the battle between faith and knowledge in his own soul, and had found a reconciliation between them, the way to which he was anxious to point out to us," and thus we felt "confidence that it was in his power to lead us into a service born of Faith."

This is the *mental* self-victory that is my son's,—as for the *heart*-mastery, I think the essence of it was held in that long-ago hour when my Hugh, taking Francis' hand in his own strong clasp, said, drawing Grace toward him: "You will be a brother to her,"—and Francis answered, "Yes."——

The blindness, the bodily trial; what a test of patience and submission that has been to him, and yet never a murmur escapes him.

Like Milton of old, verily the *utterance of his life*, though not spoken out in words, is

"When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he, returning, chide;
'Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?'
I fondly ask: But Patience, to prevent

That murmur, soon replies, 'God doth not need
 Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best; his state
 Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

This threefold mastery in Francis' soul over
 mind, heart, and body; this hunger and thirst
 that has been satisfied, because hunger and
 thirst after righteousness,—tell me? Does it
 not ring out a peal clear-noted as Christmas-
 tide bells of the saint-like echoes that are
 sounding in my Francis' soul and life? ring out

"Like an Æolian harp that wakes,

 Far thought, with music that it makes,
 A hidden hope,

 So heavenly toned,

 To feel although no tongue can prove,
 That every cloud that spreads above
 And veileth love, itself is love."

X.

READING over the by-gone pages, I feel there is no need for me to add to them.

For, like the stern-light of a ship casting a radiance over the waves and billows crossed, they illumine the meaning of those three enigma sentences, that in our childhood and youth, we wondered over as we read them traced on the yellow sand on the sea-shore.

“Every gift we receive is a promise,”—its sequel,—“But the gains are largely composed of what we lose.”

“Every beauty we behold but a prophecy” —consider,—“Who knows what life, and beauty, and blessedness to others, may spring from seeds dropped by our losses.”

Who knows?—

“Every pleasure we enjoy but a foretaste”
—remember,—“The Christian’s whole life is
but the earnest of the inheritance that awaits
him.”

“O Almighty God, who hast knit together Thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of Thy Son Christ our Lord; grant us grace so to follow Thy blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which Thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”—Collect for All Saints’ Day, English Prayer-book.

“He will keep the feet of His saints.”—1st Samuel ii. 9.







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